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**HUMANISM**  
**Its**  
**Philosophical,**  
**Ethical**  
**and**  
**Sociological**  
**Aspects**



Progress Publishers  
Moscow

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«Гуманизм»

На английском языке

First printing 1972

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## INTRODUCTION

The problem of man, his present and future, the free, universal and harmonious development of his faculties has today acquired a special urgency and relevance. It is intimately connected with the general fate of mankind, with the notable progress that has been made towards socialism and communism, with the magnificent discoveries of science and their technological application, with efforts to maintain world peace, to rid the world entirely of colonialism and to establish freedom and equality for all its peoples. It is particularly relevant to the struggle between communism and imperialism, between the Marxist and bourgeois ideologies.

This struggle is not confined to theoretical arguments. It assumes practical forms in mass movements, in social organisations, and not only in individual countries but on a continental and even global scale. One has only to mention the world peace movement, the various international organisations and associations actively working for peace, democracy and socialism, challenging colonialism and neo-colonialism in all its forms and defending freedom and human rights. This intense and complex struggle is spreading. It involves the most diverse social forces, classes and parties, people of differing social and property status and holding different conceptions of humanism.

The intensity of this struggle stems, on the one hand, from the character of our age with its enormous historical transformations and, on the other, from the advance of the scientific and technological revolution, its social and other consequences.

The Great Socialist Revolution of October 1917 launched a new era in human history, the era of the collapse of capitalism and establishment of communism. History has witnessed the rise of the world's first socialist system, whose goal is to satisfy the growing material and intellectual needs of *all* members of society. A social system in which concern for man is the supreme law has won through.

The historic victory of socialism in the USSR, which also had global significance, and the successful building of socialism in many countries of Europe, Asia and America, mark the triumph of the major principles of communist humanism. Having abolished class and national oppression, socialism raised the masses to active, conscious, creative work, laid the foundations for the all-round, harmonious development of every individual, the flowering of his talent and abilities.

In contrast to the world system of socialism, which has become a decisive factor in historical progress, imperialism has now entered the period of its decline; it is being torn apart by the profound and acute contradictions between labour and capital, between the people and the monopolies. Yet still it strives desperately to prolong its existence—at any price and by any means. It is safe to say that not a single socio-economic formation, in leaving the historical arena, ever caused such disasters for humanity as modern capitalism has done on its path into oblivion.

The ideologists of imperialism do all they can to paint an ugly picture of socialist reality and find apologies for the bourgeois world. They distort the most obvious facts, try to present fiction as truth, endow modern capitalism with all kinds of virtues and socialism and communism with every conceivable vice. This main line of strategy in bourgeois ideology and propaganda shows up particularly clearly in the interpretation of humanism, its meaning and essence.

We are thus faced with an astonishing paradox. A socio-political system that is inherently hostile to man, inimical to human progress, deafens the world with its proclamations about humanism and humanity! It would be hard to imagine a more vivid example of a social leopard changing its spots.

Neo-Thomism and personalism, existentialism, neo-positivism and other trends in modern bourgeois philosophy, all sally forth against the Marxist-Leninist theory of

humanism, propagate anti-scientific idealist conceptions, idealist interpretations of man's intrinsic worth, the meaning of his existence, his freedom, the conditions that make for his improvement, and so on.

In defence of their obsolete and compromised principles, the representatives of this wrong-headed bourgeois humanism declare the Marxist-Leninist solution to the problem of man and human happiness to be an unrealisable utopia because of the alleged "original sin" and "congenital selfishness" of human nature. As one might expect, the more significant and obvious the achievements of socialism have become, the more fiercely do bourgeois ideologists and their reformist and revisionist supporters attack socialist humanism, the more zealously do they seek "irreconcilable contradictions" between historical materialism and humanism, between the recognition of historical necessity and the value of the human personality, individual freedom and ideals, between "authentic" Marxism and Leninism.

In an attempt to prove their claim that Marxism-Leninism and socialist society are anti-humanist they write of the "irreconcilable contradictions" between collectivism and the possibility of fulfilment for the individual, between the Soviet or any other socialist society and state, on the one hand, and the individual, on the other, between humanity and the need to bridle the activities of the enemies of humanity; they try to present the repudiation of individualism as suppression of the individual by the masses, criticism of hypocritical abstract humanism as repudiation of humanism in general. They seek advantage from the shortcomings and as yet unsolved problems of the socialist countries and counterpose the socialism that has been built in the USSR to what they call "socialism with a human face", of which they find a model in bourgeois society and so on. For these reasons the struggle against modern anti-communism, the scientific criticism of bourgeois, reformist and revisionist ideology and exposure of its reactionary substance should be one of the first and foremost tasks of Soviet and other philosophers. General and detailed exposure of contemporary bourgeois and other brands of quasi-humanism is a vital part of this ideological struggle.

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The concept *humanism* is a complex one, covering a wide range of meanings. Most of the existing definitions differ according to the initial philosophical and socio-political attitudes of their authors. These various interpretations of humanism are also bound up with the sometimes mutually exclusive means of achieving a humanist ideal proposed by the opinion-makers of social classes and groups.

A number of writers in the West regard humanism *solely* as an ideological phenomenon and draw an antithesis between science and humanism, as though the latter could have nothing in common with scientific knowledge. This erroneous, oversimplified view is unfortunately shared by some Marxists abroad.<sup>1</sup>

Study of the history of humanist ideas and particularly the Marxist-Leninist conception of humanism reveals the theoretical weakness in these attempts to counterpose science and humanism and write off humanism as an illusory ideological phenomenon.

The concept of humanism is traditionally linked with the question of man's place in the universe, his today and tomorrow. Man is a complex bio-social being. The problems of his life and activity involve all kinds of material, social and spiritual relationships, objective laws of social development, economic, class, national, racial, family, legal, moral, psychological and other ties. The problem of humanism, therefore, demands thorough scientific analysis and its solution must take into account the sweeping scientific and technological progress of the present age and its social consequences.

Any other approach leads to insoluble riddles and mistaken conclusions, as can be seen from the current crisis in concepts of humanism based on idealist religious principles, the abstract ethical or narrow psychological approach and so on.

The history of humanist theories in progressive philosophical and social thinking has always implied a search for a scientific solution to the problem of man as the central problem of humanism.

Humanism is often identified with humaneness and re-

garded merely as a feature, or principle, of communist morality. But this understanding of the problem is also mistaken and incomplete, because humanism is much broader than either *humaneness*, or *humanity*. In the age of the Renaissance the concept of humanism went hand in hand with the ideal of the new man generated by the bourgeois culture of Western Europe in its progressive prime and known as *humanismus*, an ideal that was connected with the general ideals of classes, with their life and aspirations, with man's rights and freedom as an individual.

The problem of humanism has many aspects but despite its breadth and complexity it may and should be regarded as an internally coherent, integrated system of views. Its fullest expression is to be found in the Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism, which is a logically constructed and generalised system of philosophical, socio-economic, political, ethical and other views of man, his status and role in society, his attitude to the world, and his future. The Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism starts by treating man as a worker, a creative being, and, as such, the highest of all values. It finds expression in practical revolutionary struggle and activities designed to achieve free and comprehensive development for all members of society, to establish genuinely human relations among people, nations and countries. It, therefore, proceeds from the necessity of abolishing private ownership of the means of production and setting up socialist social relations that put an end to social antagonisms and exploitation, bring about an organic unity between public and private interests, between society and the individual, and create conditions whereby the achievements of science and technology may be fully used for the benefit of mankind. This is what Karl Marx had in mind when he linked the concept of *real humanism* with communism.

As the level, character and direction of social development have changed in the course of time so has the specific content of the problem of humanism. At the present stage in human history it centres on the key issue of modern times—elimination of the danger of a war of annihilation, establishing of world peace, and strict observance of the principle of peaceful coexistence between states with different socio-political systems. The health and happiness of hundreds of millions of people, their very existence, the

<sup>1</sup> An examination of this approach to the problem is to be found in Chapter Two of the present book.

future of mankind, the future of world civilisation and culture depend on the solution of this problem.

The complete and final abolition of all trace of colonialism and all forms of neo-colonialism, which to this day condemn tens of millions of people to poverty, starvation and even physical extinction, is essential to human progress and particularly the progress of the individual.

It must be emphasised that the question of how the principles and goals of true humanism are to be realised in practice has always been decisive, and both our definition and analysis of the problems under consideration should reflect this. The task is to deal with the problem of man in the light of the existing social conditions that make for his harmonious development. Social relationships, the links between society and the individual, the conditions and objective laws that directly determine the development of the individual must form the focus of our attention.

The founders of Marxism-Leninism did not write any special work dealing specifically with the problem of humanism, but in tackling the problems of scientific communism they always proceeded from the fact that the ultimate aim of communism is man's well-being and happiness, his free, harmonious development, and in so doing they set forth a number of major theoretical propositions that illuminate the problem of humanism from many different angles.

Systematic treatment of these propositions and the problems related to them, analysis of the whole problem of humanism in the light of the essence and ideals of Marxist-Leninist ideology are possible only on the basis of a generalisation of what is being done in practice towards building socialism and communism, a generalisation of the practice and prospects of the international communist and working-class movement, and on the basis of determined struggle against contemporary bourgeois and other anti-scientific conceptions.

\* \* \*

Speaking of the urgent need for philosophical analysis of the human personality, some philosophers, such as Adam Schaff, for instance, maintain that in the course of its development Marxism has simply ignored the problem. This

statement has, of course, been seized upon by numerous bourgeois ideologists and other opponents of Marxism. There you are, the Marxists themselves admit that Marxism ignores the problem of the individual, joyfully proclaim those who for years have been vainly trying to prove that there is no place for man in the materialist understanding of history evolved by Marx and Lenin.

In reality, however, Marxism began with the problem of the individual; it has constantly kept this problem in view, and does so even more now that the victory of communism is in what concerns the final victory of communism, for man is communism's present and ultimate aim.

The point to be remembered is that detailed research into any of the various theoretical problems of Marxism at any given period was always stimulated by definite historical circumstances. One recalls Engels' well-known explanation of why Marx and he had been compelled in their struggle against the idealists to stress the importance of the economic side of the development of society—"We had to emphasise the main principle *vis-à-vis* our adversaries, who denied it, and we had not always the time, the place or the opportunity to give their due to the other elements involved in the interaction."<sup>1</sup>

We shall not, therefore, expect to find in the classics of Marxism-Leninism any *special* study of the whole philosophical problem of humanism or an abstract treatment of the question of the individual, the meaning and purpose of life. They are not there and could not be there. But a number of fundamental, theoretical questions of humanism are raised and profoundly and thoroughly elucidated, particularly those questions that concern the working masses, their role as the creators of history and, hence, the value of the working individual, his freedom and rights, his dignity, his place and role in society; and a scientific definition is given of the conditions required for the free and all-round development of all members of society, of every individual, the conditions for establishing genuinely human relations between people.

The development of Marxist-Leninist ideas has followed

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 418.



a definite pattern. It was quite natural that at a certain stage in the development of the class struggle of the proletariat, of the socialist revolution, in the struggle for the victory of socialism, Marxist-Leninist theory should have concentrated its main attention on elaborating the questions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the socialist state, the role of the masses, the cultural revolution and other cardinal questions involved in the solution of the problems of humanism and organically connected with them.

To a certain extent this is true of the period of building socialism in the USSR, where a natural process predicated on a definite situation of socialist construction also took place, and although the conditions created by the cult of Stalin's personality inevitably affected the theoretical elaboration of the problems of humanism in the USSR, the leading Soviet magazines and publishing houses nevertheless brought out a number of interesting and useful philosophical and literary works on the subject, particularly after Maxim Gorky's famous article "Proletarian Humanism".

Since the Second World War and particularly in the last fifteen years Soviet philosophers and the Marxist philosophers of other socialist countries, and some of the capitalist countries, have been taking a much greater interest in the problems of humanism and have published a number of new and profound theoretical works,<sup>1</sup> dealing with the specific problems and fundamental principles of communist humanism, analysing the humanist nature of socialism and communism, and the problem of the individual in the socialist countries on a higher level. Several authors have criticised the pseudo-humanism of modern bourgeois theories and various opportunist conceptions and inventions, and also the direct falsification and even complete denial of the humanist teaching of Marxism-Leninism. But there is an obvious lack of published works offering a comprehensive and deep-going investigation of the subject and an effective defence against its possible distortion. This shortage is intensified by the fact that recent years have seen a marked stepping-up in the activities of the anti-humanists, the anti-communist efforts of bourgeois ideologists and their reformist and revisionist supporters.

<sup>1</sup> See Bibliography appended to this book.

From what has been said it will not be difficult to appreciate how important and urgent a task it is to provide a full, comprehensive scientific elucidation of the problems of humanism, its origins, content, development and significance at various stages in history; to investigate the Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism and marshal consistent arguments against *all* forms of belittlement, distortion or direct denial of communist humanism, its essence and role, its specific features.

The present monograph is an attempt to grapple with this task, to investigate humanism as an historical problem, involving philosophy and ethics, sociology and politics.

In preparing the present edition, which is a substantially revised and expanded version of the original work put out by Mysl Publishers in 1964, the author has taken into account new processes that are highly relevant to the theoretical comprehension and investigation of the problem, and also many comments and suggestions made in the Soviet and foreign press. Recently published works on various aspects of the problem of man and humanism have also been taken into consideration.

## CHAPTER ONE

### HUMANIST IDEALS OF THE MASSES AND THEIR REFLECTION IN PRE-MARXIST SOCIAL THOUGHT

#### 1. Popular Origins of Humanist Ideas

Marxist-Leninist humanism is closely bound up with the humanist legacy of the past, with the humanist ideals and principles embraced by the mass of the people, with the basic moral standards which they have evolved over thousands of years in their struggle against social oppression and moral degradation. These standards, principles and ideals played an exceptional part in the development of pre-Marxist humanism. The great value we attach to man as an individual, the defence of his freedom, rights and dignity, the urge to liberate man from the forces that enslave him, the noble dream of happiness for all mankind, have a history extending far into the past and are inseparable from ideas nurtured among the oppressed masses. One has only to recall ancient mythology and its immortal image of Prometheus, the selfless champion of freedom and human happiness.

It is often maintained that humanism was pioneered solely by the progressive thinkers produced by the bourgeoisie of Western Europe in its struggle against feudalism.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This proposition has had a negative effect not only on the philosophical treatment of the problem. In his *Reformationist Movements in Russia*, A. I. Klibanov writes: "Insufficient elaboration of the general concepts of humanism, with humanism being understood as an ideological reflex of already formed capitalist relations, inhibited a creative solution of this vital problem based on material from the history of Russian social thought." (A. I. Klibanov, *Reformationist Movements in Russia in the 14th and First Half of the 16th Centuries*, Moscow, 1960, p. 9, in Russian).



The importance of such brilliant and inspiring representatives of human culture as Petrarch, Boccaccio, Lorenzo Valla and other humanists of the Renaissance is beyond dispute. We all know that in the Italy of this period humanism became a mighty ideological force. But this is no reason for dating the history of humanist ideas from that particular point in time.

Even in the days when most men were slaves, when Society was built on a system of slave-ownership humanist ideas were characteristic of the ideology of the toiling masses. This is fully confirmed by the material relics of the period, by proverbs and sayings, inscriptions and epitaphs on tombstones, and also by the works of art that have come down to us from those days. Praise for the man of toil, for the dignity of the toiler and hence a certain pride in one's class, a general humanity, a sense of collectivism and similar features distinguish the outlook of both free men and slaves in the days of the Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup>

Epitaphs praise the deceased for their diligence, their professional skill and their moral strength, and one even finds depictions of the instruments of labour on the tombstones.

Of considerable interest are the many proverbs that reveal man's sense of his own worth, his feelings of collective responsibility, belief in mutual assistance and humanness: "The meek live in safety but they are slaves", "Patience often insulted turns to fury", "Evil is the man who is good only unto himself", "He who lives but for himself is justly likened unto a dead man", and so on.

A number of sayings and fables quoted by Shtaerman from the work of Avianus and Phaedrus show that the sense of humanity and friendship usually presupposed equality of status, as, for instance, in the proverbs "An equal is easily joined with equals", "There can be no friendship between a slave and his master", and so on. The same idea is expressed in Avianus's fable of the bronze and clay pitchers, and in Phaedrus' tale of the cow, the goat and the sheep who became victims of the lion.

<sup>1</sup> Soviet historian Y. M. Shtaerman's study *Morals and Religion of the Oppressed Classes in the Roman Empire*, published in 1961, is well worth reading on this subject (in Russian).

Summarising his material, Shtaerman comes to the conclusion that "...in the origin of friendly groups among the masses and in their understanding of friendship there was a distinct element of class consciousness and class pride. Such an ideology was particularly apparent in the organisation of the early Christian communes and in the early Christian attitude to the rich, but it had been cultivated in heathen soil."<sup>1</sup>

The ideas of equality, freedom from slavery, and the sense of personal dignity of working people were in varying degrees weapons in the slave rebellions that shook the foundations of the whole social system based on slave labour.

In a mystical, religious form these ideas were also expressed by the *primitive Christianity* which arose in the first century A.D., during the period of the temporary defeat of the slave movement, of the emancipation struggle of the oppressed peoples, a period of profound pessimism and disbelief in any possibility of real liberation from the suffocating power of chauvinistic, slave-owning Rome.

"Christianity," wrote Engels, "was originally a movement of oppressed people: it first appeared as the religion of slaves and emancipated slaves, of poor people deprived of all rights, of peoples subjugated or dispersed by Rome."<sup>2</sup>

Arising on such a social foundation, primitive Christianity was remarkable for its revolutionary-democratic, humanist spirit, which showed in its hostile attitude to the existing system of exploitation, in its condemnation of property inequality, and was reflected in the earliest parts of the New Testament. At first its characteristic features were indeed a humane hope of salvation from slavery and exploitation, certain democratic notions of the equality of individuals and peoples, a negative attitude towards violence and oppression, towards the rich and worldly riches. But in the course of time these features of early Christianity became so absolutised and idealised that the socio-political ideals of Christianity in general were equated with those of scientific socialism.

<sup>1</sup> Y. M. Shtaerman, *Morals and Religion of the Oppressed Classes in the Roman Empire (Italy and the Western Provinces)*, Moscow, 1961, p. 92 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Engels, *On the History of Early Christianity*. See K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion*, Moscow, 1966, p. 281.

While not denying, of course, certain points of contact between socialism and primitive Christianity, we nevertheless consider it a great mistake to attribute to the latter virtues which it never possessed and could never have possessed. One must not forget the visionary side of the early Christian notions of human equality and brotherhood. Like its other ideas, they were expressed in mystical form. It was thought that they would be realised through the intervention of some supernatural power and establishment of the divine millennium.

In the specific conditions of the class struggle of the 1st century A. D. Christianity's demand for social equality was based on the assumption that all men were equally sinful before Almighty God; the idea of unity of the peoples took the form of an extreme cosmopolitanism, and the desire for happiness was transferred to the next world.

When it became an established religion, Christianity proved to be a useful ideological tool in the hands of the exploiting classes for conditioning the masses to the idea that they were powerless in the face of nature, for fostering meekness and patience, and an abstract, universal, all-reconciling love. Christian quasi-humanism has always been a weapon of the ruling classes, but it is used particularly widely in the conditions of intense ideological struggle of the present day in order to break men's spirits and divert their attention from the urgent social issues of our time.

The social essence and reactionary nature of Christian humanism was vividly revealed by Marx.

"The social principles of Christianity," he wrote, "justified the slavery of Antiquity, glorified the serfdom of the Middle Ages and equally know, when necessary, how to defend the oppression of the proletariat, although they make a pitiful face over it.

"The social principles of Christianity preach the necessity of a ruling and an oppressed class, and all they have for the latter is the pious wish the former will be charitable.

"The social principles of Christianity transfer the consistorial councillors' adjustment of all infamies to heaven and thus justify the further existence of those infamies on earth.

"The social principles of Christianity declare all vile acts of the oppressors against the oppressed to be either the

just punishment of original sin and other sins or trials that the Lord in his infinite wisdom imposes on those redeemed.

"The social principles of Christianity preach cowardice, self-contempt, abasement, submission, dejection, in a word, all the qualities of the *canaille*..."<sup>1</sup>

This profound and incisive characterisation of Christianity was written by Marx in 1847. The propagandist disguises of Christian humanism have changed since then but their social substance has remained essentially the same.

During the age of feudalism the working people's humanist aspirations revealed themselves in the struggle against exploitation, assuming various forms in *folk art* and later, in *heresy*, depending on the specific historical conditions of the development of the people in question. Before it was ever criticised by bourgeois ideologists, the anti-human clericalism of feudal days was lampooned and vigorously attacked in folk art expressing the ideals and aspirations of the masses.

In contrast to priestly dogma, folk art concentrated on real life, on real people and their relationships. It acclaimed the man of toil, extolled his achievements, his courage and nobleness of heart, his kindness and generosity. The Russian *bylinas*, *fairy-tales* and *proverbs* are characteristic in this respect. A genuinely humanistic feature of the world outlook reflected in the Russian *bylinas* is acclaim for the peasant and craftsman. Ilya Muromets, for instance, a hero and defender of the Russian land, was a ploughman before he joined the forces of Prince Vladimir, Dobrynya Nikitich, another Russian popular hero, was also a son of the people. But the most vivid illustration of our point is to be found in the character of the peasant Mikula Selyaninovich from the *bylina* about the Champion Svyatogor. There is a wealth of meaning in the tale of Svyatogor's encounter with this simple peasant carrying a sack of earth on his shoulder. No matter how hard he rides his horse, Svyatogor is unable to overtake Mikula and has to ask him to stop. And even when Mikula does stop, the champion is not strong enough to lift the sack of earth Mikula has been carrying. Stronger even than a mighty warrior is the peasant, whose ties with the soil

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion*, Moscow, 1966, p. 74.



symbolise labour. The same idea of the superiority of the common man is also expressed in the tale of the contest between the young Kozhemyaka and the champion of the Pechenegs. The young peasant engaged in peaceful toil, puts the prince's warriors to shame.

Recreating their own features in the heroes of folklore, the people endow these heroes with feelings of deep humanity, as in the numerous variations of the *bylina* about Ilya Muromets, or the popular *bylina* "Dobrynya and Alyosha", in which Dobrynya laments the fact that his life as a warrior compels him to shed blood, "to make mothers weep", to "widow young brides" and "orphan little children". Many of the heroes of popular legend distribute the riches they find or win among the poor and homeless. One of the fundamental humanist ideas of Russian folklore is defence of the peaceful life, of peaceful labour.

All these ideas are to be found in the folk art of other peoples as well.

Though subjugated and deprived of all but the bare necessities of life the common people dreamed throughout the centuries of future happiness, of a social system where all men would be free and equal, of peace among nations. These humanist ideas found expression in such notable examples of the popular epos as David of Sasun, Narty, Jangar, Kitabi dede Korkud and Kalevala, in French and Italian early epic poetry, in the folk verse of the 12th to 14th centuries, and so on.

The mass of the peasantry fought against feudal exploitation and slavery throughout the Middle Ages. The peasant movement of the Paulicians in 7th-century Armenia, the uprising against the Armenian feudal lords and the church in the 8th century, the efforts of the Azerbaijanian people to liberate themselves from the Arabian caliphate and feudal oppression in the 9th century, the spontaneous protests of the masses in 11th and 12th-century Russia, the rebellion of the Smerds, the uprisings of the "common folk" in Kiev in 1068 and 1113, and the anti-feudal movement in 11th and 12th-century Italy (the people of Sicily abolished serfdom in the 11th century), the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453), the peasant uprisings in France and other countries—all this in varying degrees had a direct influence on the development of the humanist world outlook.

Study of the anti-feudal movement of the working masses shows that ideas extolling man and human reason and calls to fight for happiness, freedom and equality were current among the peasantry, the artisans and the urban poor well before bourgeois humanism appeared on the scene. In most cases these ideas and doctrines took the form of *heresies* and had progressive historical significance. Nearly all of them were to some degree radical, being directed against the feudal form of exploitation and the views of the established church, which stood guard over the feudal order of things.

Analysing the history of the Reformation in Russia, A. Klibanov and I. Golenishchev-Kutuzov rightly associate the emergence of the humanist world outlook with the anti-feudal struggle of the masses during the period of full-blooded feudalism.

"Of the period covering the 14th, 15th and first half of the 16th centuries it cannot be said that there was any final and established philosophical formulation of the new world outlook or any theoretical elaboration of certain of its aspects. The humanist outlook was only just beginning to take independent shape. The ideas asserting the essential dignity of man, life as a natural process, the equality of peoples and religions, were only just emerging in Russia. And yet they were not merely the lucky discoveries of certain outstanding thinkers. They had the support and momentum of social movements, reformationist movements. They also attracted the sympathetic attention of many progressive public figures who took no direct part in the religious struggle of their time."<sup>1</sup>

In the West during the 13th and 14th centuries there was questioning or open denial of the justice of social inequality, criticism of the division of people into those who must work and those who have the right to idleness, the division between rich and poor. In the ideology of the oppressed masses there was an increasing tendency to reject the idea that man was put on this earth to suffer. Thus, the medieval sect of the brothers and sisters of the free spirit, or the *béghards*,

<sup>1</sup> A. I. Klibanov, *op. cit.*, p. 384. See also I. N. Golenishchev-Kutuzov, *The Humanism of the Eastern Slavs (Ukraine and Byelorussia)*, Moscow, 1963 (in Russian).

which arose in 13th-century Flanders and consisted mainly of weavers, advocated the idea of communal property, renounced the spiritual and secular powers that oppressed man and called for the setting up of a kingdom of beatitude and justice on earth.

The most radical elements in the *Lollard heresy* that spread among the peasants and the very poor in 14th-century England demanded the holding of property in common and universal equality. The ideas of Lollard played an exceptional part in paving the way for the peasant uprisings led by Wat Tyler and John Ball. The Lollards not only condemned the feudal system but believed that its destruction by force was essential to the freedom and well-being of the masses. This was an open attack on the quasi-humanist teaching of Christianity on universal love and submission.

The idea that force could justifiably be used to defend the rights and vital interests of the people inspired the peasant rebels who seized the feudal estates and fought back against the aristocracy's attempts to suppress them. A typical example is to be found in the massive peasant and plebeian uprising in Northern Italy at the beginning of the 14th century led by Dolcino. The rebels had the courage to attack the feudal monasteries and estates, hoping to put into practice by revolutionary means the ideals of the "apostolic brothers" and to set up communities based on equality and common ownership. For more than a year they fought bravely against the vastly superior forces of Pope Clement V until the Pope launched a crusade against them and crushed the rebellion with utmost cruelty.

The peasant revolutionary attacks on feudalism, the fight for human conditions for the whole people signified in practice a complete break with many of the ideas of Christianity, such as postponement of human happiness to the next world, submission to one's masters and the idea of waiting passively for better days. This active, revolutionary struggle uplifted the common folk, nourished their sense of dignity and liberated them from many superstitions that belittled the men of toil and gave them a sense of spiritual and moral inferiority.

Humanist ideas were widespread in the *Hussite movement* in Bohemia (15th century) and particularly its radical trend, known in history as the *Taborites*. The Left wing of

the Taborites openly advocated the abolition of the feudal order. Jan Huss and his followers believed in a social system where state power would disappear and there would be no tribute, no privileged estates and no private property. The Left-wing Taborites proposed sharing all property in common, in the spirit of "peasant communism".

Later we find demands similar to those of the Left-wing Taborites in the views of Thomas Münzer and the Anabaptists current in Germany in the period of the Peasant War of 1525. In a famous epistle expounding Münzer's programme, the winning of human happiness was predicated on the revolutionary overthrow of the feudal system and the setting up of a just order based on the common good.

The humanist ideas and aspirations of the masses were voiced by the *advanced thinkers and public men* of the Middle Ages, as can be seen from the work of many philosophers and poets of the *Orient*, particularly the Transcaucasus, in the 12th and 13th centuries, where with the development of craft industries and trade, the growth of towns and the deepening of contradictions between the ruling feudal class, on the one hand, and the anti-feudal masses, on the other, a new, secular culture had begun to emerge.

In contrast to traditional feudal-religious beliefs, the new culture centred on man in his real, sensuous state, his joys and sorrows, his worldly interests and aspirations. It glorified the man of action and willpower, who regards himself as a whole and independent being and refuses to submit passively to fate, who may even rebel at times against divine providence and wants to create happiness with his own hands in this world.

The work of the great Azerbaijanian poet and thinker Nizami praised the strength and beauty of the common people, their superiority over rulers and despots.

In the poem *Khosrau and Shirin*, the builder Ferikhad boldly defends his right to love a woman who is loved by the tyrant Shah Khosrau himself. Ferikhad is a man of toil. When it comes to the test, he turns out to be far superior to Khosrau not only physically but mentally and morally as well.

In his poem *The Storehouse of Mysteries* Nizami expressed a social protest against the exploitation and robbing of work-



ing people. He branded meakness and submission, opposed feudal tyranny and condemned all shahs, bad and good. But Nizami did not and could not know the true path of emancipation from tyranny and oppression. Nevertheless he was determined not to lull himself and others with dreams of heavenly salvation and looked forward to a reasonably and justly organised life on this earth.

In his last poem, *Iskandarnama*, Nizami envisaged an ideal community where all citizens would work and enjoy equal rights, and wrote in praise of national and racial equality and friendship of the peoples.

Characteristically, Nizami was directly connected with the masses, with the secret society of urban craftsmen "Akhi".

Humanist ideas permeate the work of the great Georgian poet Shota Rustaveli. His poem *The Knight in the Tiger's Skin* extols not an abstract Christian love of man for man and man for God but the real love of real people. He praises friendship and courage and exults in man, his intellect, his strong, harmoniously developed body. Rustaveli's heroes are inspired by a profound patriotism and are ready to defend their homeland, relying only on their own strength, courage and resolution.

It was no accident that for centuries reactionary clerics inveighed against Rustaveli's poem and tried to neutralise its "sinful" ideas and un-Christian mode of thinking. In Rustaveli's heroes they justifiably saw the negation of their own "heroes".

Humanist ideas manifested themselves vividly in the medieval democratic culture of Armenia, where they were upheld by forward-looking poets and reflected in the art of Armenian miniaturists and musicians. Most characteristic in this respect was the outstanding Armenian poet Frikk (13th century), who criticised social inequality and expressed his indignation at the injustice of God who had given untold wealth to some and deprived others of the bare necessities. Expressing the democratic strivings of the oppressed classes, Frikk relentlessly exposed the unreasonableness and injustice of fate as personified by the Deity. It was a fate that always smiled on the rich and trampled on the poor.

The humanist ideas of the popular epos influenced the development of the *urban culture of medieval France* (end

of the 11th century to the middle of the 13th century). The satirical tales in verse (*fabliaux*) that were characteristic of the period made fun of the priests, their greed, selfishness and narrow-mindedness and, in contrast, praised the quick-witted, resourceful sons of the people. Among such *fabliaux* are *Brunian la vache au prêtre*, and *Le vilain mire*.

The splendid poems of the 13th century, *Le Roman de Renart* and *Roman de la rose*, which condemned the hypocrisy of the priests and religious superstition in general, influenced not only the French but nearly all the West-European literature of the Renaissance.

The ideas of these *fabliaux* and poems, particularly *Le Roman de Renart* and *Le vilain mire*, were used later by such bourgeois humanists as Molière, in *Le Médecin malgré lui* and Goethe, in *Reineke Fuchs*.

It is generally known that the development of French literature in the 14th and 15th centuries was profoundly influenced by the Hundred Years' War and the peasant uprisings, particularly by the heroic figure of Jeanne d'Arc.

In 13th- and 14th-century Italy, folk poetry fostered the "Sicilian school" of Tuscan poetry and the "Dolce Stil Nuovo". Having rejected the traditional heroine of clerical verse the Virgin Mary, the poets of the 13th century Guido Guinicelli and Guido Cavalcanti turned the idealised madonna into a secular figure. Both Petrarch and Boccaccio borrowed from these poets.

Analysis of the influence of the humanist ideas of the masses on the ideology of the advanced thinkers and public men of the Middle Ages, on the formation of bourgeois humanism in the Age of the Renaissance is a matter for special study. But even the far from complete material referred to here is sufficient to show that these ideas and ideals were not confined solely to the Renaissance. As we have seen, their history goes back to the struggle of the masses against exploiters of all kinds, against slavery and feudalism, and they were first expressed in various forms of folk art.

These ideas were generated by specific socio-historical conditions of national development, which in turn also determined the depth and form of their expression. Despite their variety, they all tended to express similar concern for the exploited and oppressed, for freedom, for the rights and

happiness of the working man and, in the final analysis, the essential worth of the working people.

The humanist ideas and aspirations of the masses exercised a tremendous influence on the development of progressive public men and philosophers. They acquired theoretical expression in the ideology of the historically progressive classes and social forces, specifically in the work of bourgeois ideologists during the period when the bourgeoisie was a historically progressive force.

The Renaissance saw the emergence of two trends in humanist ideas, trends that, although still linked by opposition to the feudal order and the church and at times intersecting in the views of some thinkers, sprang from significantly differing social roots and dealt with different problems and interests. One of these trends was expressed by the historically progressive bourgeois thinkers of the 17th and 18th centuries (beginning of the 13th in some countries), while the other was pursued by representatives of the popular liberation movement and utopian socialism and communism, which will be considered in later sections of this chapter. It must be stated at once, however, that it is not our task to analyse the views or the philosophical conceptions of all the representatives of the above-mentioned trends. This is a matter for special research going beyond the subject of this book.

## 2. Progressive Period of Bourgeois Humanism

The development of capitalist relations within the feudal system found expression in philosophy, literature, art, in all spheres of intellectual life. As has been said, the ideology of the rising, progressive bourgeoisie was connected with the anti-feudal ideology of the masses. This was natural enough because they were both directed against feudal relations and the feudal-clerical view of the world. For a time they pursued common aims. Despite the quite specific differences between them, the two ideologies sought to liberate people from the social and spiritual bonds of feudalism.

Developing capitalism needed unrestricted manpower, a workman who was not bound by personal allegiance. It

was eager to shake off the social hierarchy of feudalism and establish equality before the law. Its development implied a rapid growth of the productive forces and this in turn required a rapid increase in scientific knowledge. These were the conditions that determined the characteristic features of bourgeois humanism. Wittingly or unwittingly its representatives upheld from the bourgeois point of view freedom and equality, and liberation of the intellect from the power of the church. Their earliest works revealed a clearly pronounced desire to extol man, to stress his essential worth and proclaim the inalienable rights of the individual. As time went on this tendency became more and more anti-theological.

*The bourgeois humanism of the Renaissance* grew increasingly bold in the defence of human values from religious tutelage and was soon heading towards total denial of the supernatural. It proclaimed a cult of man and of human reason, expressed invincible faith in man's tremendous creative potential and gradually evolved its own philosophical, sociological and ethical conception in its war on theology and scholasticism. Step by step the advanced thinkers of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries undermined the foundations of religious teaching, ever seeking to narrow the "domain of the divine" and extend the "domain of man". They tried to explain all phenomena without resorting to the traditional religious mystification, to the arguments of a pitifully diminished scholasticism that was out of touch with man and nature and entirely committed to upholding all the divine "truths".

The German humanists Erasmus of Rotterdam, Johann Reuchlin, Ulrich von Hutten and their followers made a great contribution to the criticism of scholasticism and the whole medieval, feudal-clerical outlook.

Johann Reuchlin's associates wrote the *Letters of Ignorant People*, a biting satire on scholastic thinking and religious obscurantism, in which they pilloried the "ignorant people", the ecclesiastics whose sole aim in life was to persecute men of science and extinguish the torch of reason.

The struggle against the feudal church's attitude to life stimulated the development of science, which was represented at this time by such outstanding thinkers as Nikolaus Copernicus and Giordano Bruno.



The new philosophy sought to discover the objective causes of natural and social phenomena, to produce knowledge that would increase man's power over nature and allow him to improve his conditions of life. The humanism of the Renaissance focused its attention on man and his social and natural environment and many of the humanist works of the period were permeated with the faith that a man with an active mind and body was capable of performing miracles, transforming life and achieving abundant happiness. Rejecting and ridiculing religious asceticism, mortification of the flesh and withdrawal from the world, they urged people to seek joy on this earth.

In his *De remediis utriusque fortunae* (*On the Paths That Lead to Fortune*) Petrarch proclaimed the idea of human equality and spoke of the need to respect human dignity, making man's personal qualities and conduct the criterion of human worth. "Blood is always the same colour," he wrote. "But should one man's blood be of a somewhat lighter hue, it creates not nobility but a more healthy body. The man of true virtue is not born with a great soul, he makes himself so by his splendid deeds. . . . A man's dignity is not lost through being of lowly origin, but he must deserve it by his life."

A notable representative of early bourgeois humanism Lorenzo Valla wrote a famous treatise *De Voluptate* (*On Pleasure as True Happiness*), in which the individual's urge for self-preservation and desire to gratify the senses and avoid pain are treated as legitimate demands of nature. Similar Epicurean ideas and attitudes are expressed in the works of the French and German humanists, particularly Rabelais. In contrast to the religious precepts of chastity, poverty and obedience, the slogan of the Abbey of the Telemites in *Gargantua and Pantagruel* is "Do What Thou Wilt". "Because men that are free, well-born, well-bred, and conversant in honest companies, have naturally an instinct and spur that prompteth them unto virtuous actions, and withdraws them from vice. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Obviously then the bourgeois humanism of the Renaissance was centred on a man of flesh and blood with all his earthly

joys and sorrows, a vigorous, active human being armed with knowledge and determined to fashion his own happiness, and although its foremost thinkers had not entirely freed themselves of religious influences and superstitions generated by feudalism, the mainstream of their work went far beyond the confines of feudal-clerical ideology. As a rule, the humanists of the Renaissance still made use of the traditional religious concepts and expressions, while giving them fresh meaning. Pico della Mirandola's conception of man's purpose in life is characteristic. In an oration entitled "On Human Dignity" Pico makes God address Adam in the following words: "I have set thee in the midst of the world, that thou mayst the more easily behold and see all that is therein. I created thee a being neither heavenly nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal only, that thou mightest be free to shape and to overcome thyself. Thou mayst sink into a beast, and be born anew to the divine likeness. The brutes being from their mother's body what they will carry with them as long as they live; the higher spirits are from the beginning, or soon after, what they will be for ever. To thee alone is given a growth and a development depending on thine own free will. Thou bearest in thee the germs of a universal life."<sup>1</sup>

This striking passage proclaimed a new approach to man as a being who may become his "own sculptor and conqueror".

The humanist ideas of the Renaissance found artistic expression in its wonderful painting, architecture and sculpture that elevated man. Biblical subjects are still retained in many of the works of this profoundly humanist art but their interpretation has little in common with traditional religious attitudes. On the contrary, their line of thought tends constantly to enlarge "the domain of man", to assert the earthly view, to extol noble characters endowed with strong passions, in love with life and eager to enjoy the beauty of it.

The humanists' condemnation of war is of exceptional interest, particularly Erasmus of Rotterdam's appeal:

"Let all people unite against war. Let all people raise

<sup>1</sup> François Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, New York, 1928, p. 145.

<sup>1</sup> See Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, London, 1945, pp. 215-216.

their voice against it. Let all people preach, glorify and extol peace both in public and in private. . . .

"Know ye what tremendous power lieth hidden in the concord of a multitude opposed to the tyranny of the nobility! . . .

"Most of the people hate war and pray for peace. Only a few whose vile prosperity depends on the people's grief desire war."<sup>1</sup>

To this day those words have the ring of urgency. They could easily be used from the platform of a World Peace Congress because they still express, just as they did five hundred years ago, the desire, will and ideals of the mass of the people.

Summing up the Renaissance, Engels wrote: "It was the greatest progressive revolution that mankind had so far experienced, a time which called for giants and produced giants—giants in power of thought, passion and character, in universality and learning. The men who founded the modern rule of the bourgeoisie had anything but bourgeois limitations".<sup>2</sup>

This high assessment still retains its significance in the struggle against the nihilistic, oversimplified views of the extreme Left.

The humanism of the 14th-16th centuries provided a firm foundation for the higher forms of bourgeois culture of the period of bourgeois revolutions in the Netherlands, England, France and other countries of Europe.

The *ideologists of the Dutch and English bourgeois revolutions* of the 17th century also championed the rights of the individual, democratic freedoms and humanity among men. With varying degrees of consistency every one of them upheld the need to destroy the feudal absolutist monarchy, the despotic forms of government, and justified the restriction or complete abolition of the privileges of the feudal estates. From Spinoza to Locke progressive thinkers opposed the imposition of reactionary, anti-scientific beliefs, attacked religious fanaticism and intolerance and defended the principles of religious freedom, and freedom of thought and

<sup>1</sup> Erasmus Desiderius, *Querella pacis*.—*Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*, t. IV, Hildesheim, 1962, pp. 638, 642.

<sup>2</sup> F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1966, p. 21.

speech. Admittedly, these demands did not go beyond the bourgeois understanding of individual rights but in the period under consideration they were progressive and revolutionary.

The establishment of bourgeois socio-economic and political relations was a great step forward compared with feudalism in the assertion of the human personality and its liberation from many forms of material and spiritual bondage. It gave birth to a new, more advanced evaluation of man's essential worth, his purpose in life and his rights. A new humanist conception came into being, a secular, anti-theological conception opposed to all attempts to present man as a slave of "supernatural forces". The new humanism was aimed against social inequality, despotic forms of government, against feudal methods of making one man a slave of another. It likewise registered progress in moral awareness and upheld values that were of great social significance.

The ideologists of the rising bourgeoisie were particularly interested in a proper relationship between the individual and society, which, as a rule, they identified with the feudal state. In tackling this theoretically important problem, bourgeois ideologists set out to dethrone the old conception of the state, which was a weapon in the hands of the feudal ruling classes, hindered the development of the bourgeois system and prevented the bourgeoisie from expanding in the economic, political and spiritual spheres. The new ideal of the state embodying the "common interest" reflected consciously or unconsciously the interest of the bourgeois class.

Rejecting the idea that the state was of supernatural origin, the advanced thinkers of the age tried to give a rationalist explanation of the humane and reasonable factors that had brought it into being. The English philosopher Hobbes, for instance, believed that man had created the state to put an end to "the natural condition", when people for the sake of self-preservation and their own prosperity were compelled to wage continual war against one another ("war of all against all"), and to act according to the principle of "man unto man is a wolf". According to Hobbes, the state restricts the freedom of individuals but does so in their own interests, to stop them from annihilating one



another. Man's natural freedom must be curtailed or restricted by law because otherwise he cannot live in peace with his own kind. "...Law was brought into the world for nothing else but to limit the natural liberty of particular men, in such manner as they might not hurt, but assist one another, and join together against a common enemy."<sup>1</sup>

Fear of civil war and the desire to prevent it prompted Hobbes to endow the state with absolute and unlimited power. His absolutisation of the state and excessive restriction of personal freedom were justifiably opposed by the more radical thinkers of the revolutionary bourgeoisie, defenders of democratic forms of government. While appreciating the strength of the arguments against Hobbes's doctrine of the state, we must also remember that he envisaged the state as both strong and just, providing protection for the legitimate rights of the individual against violence and lawlessness. From Hobbes's arguments in favour of supreme power in the interests of the individual it may easily be inferred that a government is valid and in harmony with its own nature only as long as it does not cause harm but, on the contrary, furthers peace, concord and happiness among its citizens.

Hobbes renounced absolute and immutable moral standards and developed the thought that the morality of any action must be judged not according to supernatural, metaphysical principles but by its contribution to the common good. He made a number of profound observations on the need for combining personal interests with those of society (the state).

Bourgeois humanism achieved its highest peak, however, in the work of the *French enlighteners of the 18th century*.

The power and scope of the French Enlightenment reflected the intensity of the antagonistic contradictions between the system of feudal monarchy and the new, capitalist relations that were being formed. Nowhere in Europe was the struggle between feudalism and the capitalism that had matured within its framework so direct and uncompromising as in pre-revolutionary France. Accordingly, the criticism of the whole system of the feudal-clerical outlook, of all

the political, economic, philosophical, ethical and aesthetic ideas committed to the defence of feudal relationships, was extremely militant and aggressive in character.

Many representatives of the French Enlightenment of the 18th century proclaimed man as the highest value. Man was the only being on earth capable of creating new values apart from those provided by nature, capable of perfecting life, ennobling himself and the surrounding world. "We must never lose sight of the fact," wrote Diderot, "that if man, that is to say, the one being capable of thought and contemplation, were banished from the face of the earth, all our superb and inspiring landscapes would be reduced to nought but melancholy and silence.... Then why not assign to man in our undertaking (The Encyclopedia—*M.P.*) a place commensurate with that which he occupies in the universe? Why not make him the general centre.... Man is the only point from which all must issue and to which all must return."<sup>1</sup>

The French enlighteners believed that the world should worship man, if only because man alone possessed self-awareness, awareness of joy and grief, of the just and the unjust, the ability to conceive of life and death. This alone warranted the greatest possible concern for the individual.

Rejecting the religious, spiritualistic explanation of the origin of man, the French enlighteners laid special emphasis on the idea that man is part of nature and there is nothing supernatural or mystical about him. The standards of moral conduct are, therefore, to be deduced from the laws of nature and not from "divine principle".

Like any living creature, man seeks to avoid unpleasant sensations and to experience those that are pleasant. From this premise Diderot and his materialist followers drew very definite anti-feudal and anti-theological conclusions. Man had been born for happiness but he was fettered by the chains of social and spiritual slavery. "Nearly everywhere," wrote Holbach, "man is a wretched prisoner, deprived of all greatness of spirit, reason and valour, forbidden the light of day by his heartless gaolers."<sup>2</sup> This idea of man as a

<sup>1</sup> D. Diderot, *Oeuvres complètes*, t. 14, Paris, 1876, p. 453.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Holbach, *Système de la nature*, London, 1771, t. I, "Préface de l'auteur".

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, London, 1886, p. 124.

prisoner, the idea that the existing social system deprived him of his inalienable right to happiness and pleasure was shared by all the French enlighteners, irrespective of their philosophical beliefs. Jean Jacques Rousseau began the first chapter of his famous *Social Contract* with the words: "Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the humanism of the French Enlightenment was based on man's natural right to pleasure and happiness. But what kind of happiness?

The French enlighteners resolutely and consistently rejected all attempts to seek happiness beyond the limits of man's terrestrial existence and discarded the traditional conception of ultimate bliss in heaven. When they spoke of human happiness, they meant the only possible happiness—earthly happiness.

When defining the concept of happiness, the ideologists of the pre-revolutionary French bourgeoisie, from Montesquieu to Holbach, wrote of material well-being, political freedom of the individual and human equality. Neither Helvetius, nor Diderot, nor Holbach, nor any of the other French enlighteners of the 18th century associated material well-being with property equality, with the abolition of private ownership. They went no further than the utopian demand for limitation only of excessive inequality in property and argued rather firmly against the communist ideals upheld by Meslier, and later, by Morelly and Mably. Holbach, for instance, reached the conclusion that the existence of social and property inequality, far from contradicting moral principles, actually promoted co-operation and mutual assistance among people at different levels of the social and property-owning scale.

Helvetius and Holbach were convinced that the mere abolition of feudal relationships would bring plenty for everyone in its train. This was, of course, an illusion. Feudalism was to be followed by the capitalist system with all its antagonisms and new forms of exploitation and enslavement.

While opposing the feudal, absolutist order of things, arbitrary rule, enslavement of the individual, harsh regimentation of the conduct of any man who did not belong to the

<sup>1</sup> Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, New York, 1948, p. 1.

ruling feudal estates, the French enlighteners only upheld the restricted bourgeois conception of freedom. This was the spirit in which they formulated the basic principles of the bourgeois-democratic freedoms and made out the theoretical case for freedom of speech, the press, conscience and so on.

The enlighteners concentrated on defending the bourgeois-democratic state. Admittedly, many of them, though attracted to the republican form of government, considered it suitable only for small countries and gave preference to the "enlightened monarchy". But the "enlightened monarchy", defended by Helvetius, Diderot and Holbach, was, in effect, a bourgeois-democratic state committed to carrying out and upholding deep-going democratic reforms in the interests of the "third estate", primarily, of course, the bourgeoisie.

It is hard to overestimate the historical significance of the French enlighteners' defence of the principle of individual freedom, emancipation from feudal oppression, the tyranny of absolutist rule, but their conception of individual freedom had bourgeois limitations. Because it defended the principle of private property, it actually ruled out any possibility of real human freedom, freedom from all forms of exploitation, and, consequently, from political oppression.

As for their idea of equality, it expressed a desire to put an end to feudal privileges and make all men equal before the law. This legal equality, its theoretical substantiation and practical realisation also represented tremendous progress in social and political life, in extending human rights, an important step towards transforming social life on the basis of humanist principles. But founded as it was on privately owned, capitalist enterprise, it could not prevent the rise of new, legally protected privileges for the ruling, exploiting classes and new forms of legal deprivation for the mass of the people.

It goes without saying that in advancing and defending their extremely humane principles, Diderot and his followers sincerely believed that they were upholding freedom and equality for the whole people.

Any account of the humanist theories of the French enlightenment would be incomplete without some mention of the ethical views of their exponents.

It is common knowledge that the opponents of materialist philosophy tried, and are still trying, to present the ethics



of La Mettrie, Helvetius, Diderot and Holbach as the ethics of crude egoism and in contradiction to the principles of humanism.

It is true that the French materialists of the 18th century regarded man as selfish by nature and wrongly assumed that egoism had always been and would continue to be an essential feature of human psychology, the guiding principle of man's behaviour. It will be readily appreciated, however, that in so assuming they absolutised the characteristic features of the property owner, the bourgeois, which they took to be general human characteristics and treated as eternal. Having no faith in the possibility or expediency of communist organisation of society, they naturally ruled out the possibility of overcoming individualism and self-love. Helvetius, for instance, who regarded self-love as the result of physical sensitivity, wrote that of all feelings it alone possessed the quality of permanence. "We owe to it all our desires, all our passions, which are in us merely the application of the feeling of self-love to a particular object."<sup>1</sup>

But this deliberate stress on self-love was designed not to justify the "war of all against all", amorality, indifference or cruelty of one individual towards his fellow men, but quite the opposite.

Helvetius and his associates were trying to find the real, natural basis of a new ethics to offset the spiritualistic ethic which sought support in divine revelation, in innate ideas and feelings of good and justice, and which ruled out the idea of any social reforms that would make man humane and compel him through love of self to respect the interests of others.

Indeed, all the works of La Mettrie, Helvetius, Diderot and Holbach were permeated with a sense of profound respect for and love of man, an urge to make him happy, to establish the most humane relations between people, and to foster elevated moral principles.

To the question of whether the "egoistic nature of man" constituted an insuperable obstacle to humanism, to humane morality, the French materialists replied with an unhesitating no. They believed in the possibility of combining personal

<sup>1</sup> Claude-Adrien Helvetius, *Oeuvres complètes*, t. 2, *De l'homme*, Paris, 1818, p. 211.

and public interests and argued that in certain conditions people would unwaveringly observe the interests of others for the sake of their own. "All the knowledge of moralists," Helvetius wrote, "lies in the ability to make use of . . . rewards and punishments and extract from them the means of linking personal interest with the general. . . . If citizens could not attain personal happiness in any other way than by contributing to the common good, only the insane would do wrong: everyone else would be compelled to practice virtue. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Holbach argues similarly in favour of creating conditions that would make it unprofitable to violate the interests of society. "We must always remember," one reads in his *Système de la nature*, "that our permanent happiness must be founded on self-respect and the good we can bring to others, and that for the man living in society there is no greater folly than the desire to render only himself happy."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, we see that humane relationships are achieved not through abstract religious and mystical teaching but by creating a legal situation that promotes the formation of individuals with philanthropic moral conceptions, the formation of people prepared to work for the good of society. The French materialists linked the realisation of this ideal with the overthrow of feudal society, the absolute monarchy, which by their very existence evoked the desire to achieve happiness through deception, banditry and servility.

And yet the humanism of the French materialists was limited. This is apparent from their desire to deduce virtue from egoism, to make self-love the point of departure of a new morality, to proclaim altruism and self-sacrifice mere groundless notions. Helvetius's statement is characteristic: "The virtuous man is not he who sacrifices his habits and strongest passions for the sake of the common weal—such a man is impossible—but he whose strong passion is so well attuned to the interest of society that he is nearly always compelled to be virtuous."<sup>3</sup>

The class limitations of the humanism of the French materialists were revealed in the fact that while pursuing

<sup>1</sup> Claude-Adrien Helvetius, *De L'esprit*, Londres, 1776, t. I, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Holbach, *Système de la nature*, Londres, 1771, t. I, p. 361.

<sup>3</sup> Claude-Adrien Helvetius, *De L'esprit*, Londres, 1776, t. I, p. 491.

the aim of combining private and public interest they in one way or another always placed the logical emphasis on private interest. It is for the sake of personal interest that the public interests are to be observed.

Their conviction that the society that was to supersede feudalism would bring the triumph of humanist relations and humanist morality was, of course, utopian. Capitalism that took the place of the feudal system consolidated bourgeois morality with its unrelenting individualistic and self-centred motivation.

Nevertheless the class limitations of the French materialists of the 18th century cannot invalidate the outstanding contribution which they made to the development of humanism and the humanist ethic. Their doctrine of the decisive role of the social environment in the formation of man's intellectual and moral nature served, as we shall see later, as one of the ideological sources of the utopian socialism and communism of the 19th century.

*The work of the ideologists of German bourgeois enlightenment*—Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Goethe and others—was studded with humanist ideas. All of them, in one form or another and to varying degrees, opposed feudal inequality and personal bondage, defended the ideas of equality among men and nations, renounced medieval asceticism and proclaimed man's right to happiness.

Lessing, for example, declared humaneness to be the general direction in which all mankind was to develop. His aesthetic beliefs are of great significance in the development of humanist theories. Like Diderot, Lessing rejected the traditions of medieval romanticism and insisted that art should be concerned with life and its social implications. Dethroning the heroes of medieval literature, he wrote that art should dedicate itself to the "third estate", to man, the embodiment of humanity, courage and strength in the struggle for noble ideas. This he himself demonstrated in his dramatic poem *Nathan the Wise*.

Also profoundly humanistic was Herder's idea that the history of man is a united, consistently developing process of the activity of various peoples. Herder attached great value to folk art and wrote of its exceptional importance in the development of art in general, his chief enthusiasm being for its humane spirit. He regarded humanity as the major

factor in historical and cultural development, as the essence of man as a social being.

The contribution of Lessing, Herder, and other German enlighteners to the development of humanism was indeed a great one and went beyond the confines of their own time. Their condemnation of colonial wars, national oppression and the enslavement of backward peoples retains its force to this day. But they, too, shared the shortcomings of the age in which they lived, added to which their socio-political attack was much less sharp than that of the French. This is even more true of the German thinkers of the later period.

In the specific economic and socio-political conditions of Germany at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century bourgeois moral conceptions, and the aims of social development deduced from them, took a more moderate form. They were neither radical in character nor revolutionary in spirit; nor did they make any open appeals to put an end to feudalism as those of the French enlighteners of the 18th century had done. The explanation lies, of course, in the feeble development of capitalist relations in Germany at the time, the weakness and half-heartedness of the German bourgeoisie, which was compelled to make concessions to feudalism and the feudal-religious ideology.

The outcome of these circumstances was that right up to the time of Feuerbach German philosophy was dominated by idealist trends that had not broken with religion and religious morality. Kantian idealist ethics, for example, were proclaimed by the bourgeois and, later, the revisionist and Right-reformist theorists little short of the peak of humanism! Since those days, keeping up the tradition, so to speak, contemporary opportunists in various countries have done their best to counterpose so-called "ethical socialism" to scientific socialism and "complement" Marxism with Kant's ethical teaching or else reduce it to Hegelianism and so on. We must therefore examine, at least briefly, the interpretation of bourgeois humanism offered by Kant and Hegel.

It is, of course, possible to perceive in Kant, through the idealism and religion, in a very inconsistent, ambivalent form, with obvious tendencies to compromise with the feudal system and the feudal-religious ideology, certain ideas on the need for a gradual reform of the feudal system, extension of human rights and freedom, elaboration of a new



world outlook that would take into account social progress and the achievements of science. While opposing French materialism and atheism, Kant nevertheless inclined toward many of the socio-political ideas of Rousseau. Following Rousseau, he defended the principles of freedom and equality, as understood from the bourgeois point of view, and expressed in clear terms his disapproval of feudal social inequality and the definition of a man's rights and worth according to his social origin.

In his treatise on *Perpetual Peace* Kant substantiated the necessity and possibility of abolishing wars between states and declared peace to be the supreme good for mankind. In an essay *On the Diverse Races of Man* he affirmed, in direct contradiction to racialism, the essential unity of the whole human race and argued that all races belong to the universal family of mankind.

His bourgeois-humanist ideals found their fullest and clearest expression in his ethical doctrine. Despite its formalistic, extremely abstract character, despite the gap between what is and what should be, this teaching does express the urge to elevate man, to abolish all forms of coercion and make possible the flowering and self-realisation of the individual. Kantian ethics stressed the point that man should always be an end and never merely a means.

The humanist direction of Kant's basic law of "practical reason" is indisputable. This moral law or, as it is usually called, the *categorical imperative*, was formulated in the following famous words: "Act so that the maxim of thy will can always at the same time hold good as a principle of universal legislation."<sup>1</sup> This means that a man should not take with regard to others any action that he would not consider desirable for himself. And since no man would desire to experience suffering he should not cause suffering to others.

Kantian humanism, however, is extremely abstract and formalistic in character. His demand that we should treat people as ends and never merely as means lacked any real substance because he regarded private property as one of the eternal and inalienable rights of man, whereas in fact

<sup>1</sup> Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Practical Reason and Other Ethical Treatises*, Chicago, 1952, p. 302.

the private ownership of factories, landed estates and so on is inevitably connected with the exploitation of man by man.

In a society consisting of antagonistic classes, where the interests of the contending classes, of the oppressors and the oppressed, increasingly conflict, Kant calls for goodness and mercy towards all people without exception. It is clear that such an ethical conception, regardless of Kant's subjective motives, could serve only the interests of the ruling, exploiting classes.

One must also point out the *a priori*, idealist initial principles of Kant's ethics and his humanism. Whereas the French materialists of the 18th century strove to deduce the individual's moral conduct from his real material and moral interests, Kant rejects from the very start any utilitarian basis for morality. From the Kantian point of view even the most virtuous action ceases to be moral if the man who performs it is guided by empirical considerations, by "external" ends, or the desire for sensual pleasure. Given this approach, even actions dictated by love and compassion cannot be classed as moral. Moral actions are only those which are performed at the behest of abstract duty, which Kant regards as something wholly *a priori*, without any basis in empirical reality.

"The notion of morality and duty," Kant writes, "must have preceded any regard to this satisfaction (peace of mind—*M.P.*), and cannot be derived from it."<sup>1</sup>

Kant did not deny that the desire for happiness is inherent in every reasonable human being, but he flatly refused to see the inner connection between morality and happiness. Regarded from this point of view, moral conduct was totally separated from actual social relations, from social practice, from people's struggle for real happiness and well-being. Here we see particularly clearly the difference between the practical morality of the ethical teaching of the French enlighteners of the 18th century and the passively contemplative nature of Kant's humanism.

Whereas the French enlighteners advanced theories for the revolutionary transformation of practice, Kant confined all his sublime and noble aspirations to the sphere of in-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 306.

tropective thought. This contradiction was emphasised by Marx and Engels. They wrote: "The state of Germany at the end of the last century (the 18th century—*M.P.*) is fully reflected in Kant's *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*. While the French bourgeoisie, by means of the most colossal revolution that history has ever known, was achieving domination and conquering the Continent of Europe... the impotent German burghers did not get any further than good will."<sup>1</sup>

Because the German bourgeoisie in the shape of its leading thinkers was incapable of putting that "good will" into practice here, on this earth, in a resolute struggle against the bearers of "ill will", the ruling feudal estates, it postponed the resolution of these contradictions to the transcendental, "world beyond" and relied on mystical forces and principles.

Having divorced humanist ideals, their realisation, from any real, empirical foundation, from actual forces, Kant linked his basic ethical law with postulates advanced by "practical reason", that is to say, the postulates of free will, the immortality of the soul and God, which he had declared incapable of proof from the standpoint of "pure reason". Kant thus acknowledged the ideas of immortality of the soul and God, in the struggle against which the humanist ideals of the masses and also historically progressive bourgeois humanism had evolved.

Unlike the French materialists, Kant believed that God was the supreme motivator of universal moral harmony.

"Kant," wrote Marx and Engels, "was satisfied with 'good will' alone, even if it remained entirely without result, and he transferred the *realisation* of this good will, the harmony between it and the needs and impulses of individuals to *the world beyond*."<sup>2</sup>

It is this turning away from real life, from the objective laws and contradictions of development, from the real interests of the working people that is mainly responsible for the reverence in which Kantian ethics and humanism are held by bourgeois ideologists, the theorists of revisionism and Right-wing reformism today.

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1968, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

A special role in the development of humanist theories, particularly the philosophical questions connected with the problem of man, was played by Hegel, even though he approached them and solved them from the standpoint of *objective idealism*.

Hegel developed Fichte's idea of the creative activity of the subject, the idea that a man creates his own essence in the process of his practical activity. This idea, in particular, provides the foundation of Hegel's criticism of the formalism of Kantian ethics, his tendency to examine man's inner moral self-awareness apart from his real actions. "As a man is outwardly, that is to say in his actions," wrote Hegel, "...so is he inwardly: and if his virtue, morality, etc. are only inwardly his,—that is if they exist only in his intentions and sentiments, and his outward acts are not identical with them, the one half of him is as hollow and empty as the other."<sup>1</sup>

Proceeding from the organic unity of noumenon (essence) and phenomenon, Hegel pointed out that a man's moral essence should be judged not by his intentions but by his practical actions, his deeds. In a vivid passage he wrote, "The laurels of mere desire are but dry leaves that were never green" and the principle of duty for the sake of duty is a principle of the duality of man, which compels him "to perform with revulsion that which God commands."<sup>2</sup>

Hegel himself, however, in his treatment of the problem of the subject's practical activity *did not go beyond the framework of abstraction*. As Marx observed, "...the active side, in contradistinction to materialism, was developed by idealism—but only abstractly, since, of course, idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such."<sup>3</sup> So the problem of the activity of the subject, and also the related question of freedom, were solved by idealism virtually without regard for concrete, historical reality. The reason for this lay in Hegel's idealist system of philosophy, in which the development of universal history was predetermined by the dialectic of the development of an objective spirit, the self-

<sup>1</sup> See *The Logic of Hegel*, London, 1931, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, Berlin, 1840, S. 162, 163.

<sup>3</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Vol. I, Moscow, 1969, p. 13.



development of the absolute idea. This was what determined human actions.

The great German philosopher's views in the socio-political sphere of the problem of humanism were also contradictory.

Hegel noted the class polarisation of the society of his day. "Civil society," he wrote, "presents to us in these opposites and their intricacies a picture as remarkable in its luxury and superfluity as in its poverty and the physical and moral decadence that are common to both."<sup>1</sup>

He expressed profound ideas on the transformation of man that was to come about through narrow specialisation of the worker as an appendage of the machine, and on the stultifying monotonous character of such work. Writing of the extravagance of the rich and how they became slaves of their own property, Hegel simultaneously noted the enslavement of the poor by back-breaking toil, penury and helplessness, how they were doomed to political and spiritual bondage. "The sinking of a great mass of people below a certain level of subsistence that sets itself as essential for a member of society, and the accompanying loss of the sense of right, justice and honour to be had through one's activity and work calls into existence a *mob*, and this in its turn makes it easier for superfluous wealth to be concentrated in a few hands."<sup>2</sup>

Having acknowledged the polarisation of classes, however, Hegel declared it to be a reasonable means of realising the absolute spirit. Opposing the "cry for equality", he tried to deduce property inequality from the allegedly dissimilar natural, bodily and spiritual equipment of people.

Idealising the institution of private property and absolutising the state, Hegel sought to *reconcile classes*. As a remedy for poverty he recommended, for example, leaving the poor to their fate and allowing them to seek means of subsistence—by overt begging!

It was Hegel who wrote: "Poverty in itself makes no one member of the mob; mobs are made only by the attitude of

mind associated with poverty, the inward resentment against the rich, against society, government and so on."<sup>1</sup>

It is well known that Hegel *justified wars* in the belief that nations "acquire internal peace thanks to external wars".<sup>2</sup>

These contradictory statements of Hegel's, which were a product of his socio-political views, show that class prejudices prevented even the great Titan of dialectics from rising above his class and his time and remaining true to his method.

Even this brief consideration of the problem reveals the theoretical weakness of the bourgeois Marxologists' attempts to identify Marxism with Hegelianism, to ignore the principal difference between the Hegelian and Marxist conceptions of man. Later on, when we come to analyse the Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism, we shall see how misleading and harmful these attempts are.

The greatest German materialist philosopher of the pre-Marxist period Ludwig Feuerbach played a tremendous part in developing the dialectical-materialist conception of man.

Criticism of the religious teaching on man holds a special place in Feuerbach's humanist conception. Religion, he writes, reflects real facts and relationships distortedly, as in a crooked mirror. Man himself is subjected to the same treatment. As the slave of God, man must deny all his passions and feelings, submissively endure all the blows of fate, adjust himself passively to the existing reality and humbly await the next world.

Feuerbach resolutely discards all such conceptions of man as profoundly insulting and hostile. "Instead of religious substance man must today set himself therefore a different ideal. Our ideal is not a castrated, bodiless, abstract being. Our ideal is a whole, real, all-round, perfect, educated human being. Our ideal should include not only the salvation of the soul, not only spiritual perfection, but also bodily perfection, bodily well-being and health."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, S. 412.

<sup>3</sup> *Ludwig Feuerbachs Sämmtliche Werke*, Achter Band, *Vorlesungen über das Wesen der Religion*, Stuttgart, 1908, S. 324.

<sup>1</sup> Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, Berlin, 1840, S. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, S. 296.

Theology presents God as the prime mover and man as one of his creations. According to Feuerbach, God is no more than the objectivised essence of man and has no real existence. In thus ruling out the existence of God he simultaneously rules out the theological teaching on love of God. All love is concentrated indivisibly on man. "Love of man should not be derivative; it must become *primary*. Only then will love be a true, sacred and reliable force. If the human essence is *man's highest essence*, *love of man* should be the *highest* and *first law* of man in practice also. Man unto man is God—such is the highest practical first principle, such is the turning point in universal history."<sup>1</sup>

We shall have occasion to discuss the *abstract character of Feuerbach's humanism* later. Here it is sufficient to note the German philosopher's bold and interesting attempt to substantiate the necessity for love of man from atheist positions. It was Feuerbach's profound conviction that only materialist philosophy made man, his present and future, the centre of its interests. Only materialist philosophy was committed to serving man, to achieving his real happiness. It alone could arm man with correct knowledge of the most general laws of existence and thus assist him in taming the spontaneous forces of nature and society. Feuerbach revealed the truly humanistic nature of materialist philosophy, which the reactionaries from the camp of religion and idealism still try to present as a philosophy of egoism, greed and heartlessness.

Basing himself on the principles of philosophical anthropology, Feuerbach strove to determine ways of harmonising individual and social interests, of educating people in the spirit of humanism, of establishing principles that aim at linking the happiness of each with the happiness of all.

Feuerbach's defence of materialism, of democratic and humanist principles, and his struggle against the reactionary forces of his day earned him profound respect both in Germany and beyond its borders.

To recapitulate this chapter, I would once again empha-

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Berlin, 1956, Bd. 2, S. 409.

size that the humanist strivings of the mass of the people achieved definite expression in the work of the ideologists of the historically progressive bourgeoisie, particularly at the end of the 18th century in France, where, as Lenin wrote, "... a resolute struggle was conducted against every kind of medieval rubbish, against serfdom in institutions and ideas..."<sup>1</sup>

Historically progressive bourgeois humanism played a considerable part in exposing feudalism and its ideology, specifically, feudal religious morality. Justifying the destruction of the feudal order and its replacement by the new "order of reason", it armed the anti-feudal movement with progressive fighting slogans. The famous battle cry of the French Revolution of 1789-1794, "liberty, equality, fraternity!" which, illusory though it was, provided inspiration for the overthrow of the old system, had been drawn from the ideological arsenal of progressive bourgeois humanism. The various bourgeois humanists each gave a specific substance to the conceptions of man, his essence, his worth and vocation, his rights and the ways of achieving the humanist ideal. This was due in the final analysis to the specific historical conditions in which their views and theories developed. But, different though they were, all of them were founded on individualism, and in this lay the principal distinction between them and the humanist ideas of the masses that we examined earlier.

Another important distinction was that the starting point for bourgeois humanism was man in the abstract, man in general, whereas the ideology of the masses was concerned with the working people, the man of toil, his essential dignity, freedoms and rights.

As already stated, the humanist conceptions of the progressive bourgeois ideologists of the past, including the French materialists, inevitably bore the stamp of their historical class limitations. They could not provide a whole and consistently scientific solution to the problem of man, his complete emancipation and realistic ways of achieving it. Quite apart from anything else, this was due to the fact that their doctrines were founded on an idealist understanding of the historical process. All the same, they undoubtedly

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 24.



played their progressive part in history, and this is particularly true of the most advanced French thinkers of the 18th century.

Analysing the development of earlier materialism, Marx discovered the historical and logical connection between French materialism, its propositions concerning the role of the environment in man's development and the unity of individual and social interests, and utopian socialism. From the French materialists' assertion that all knowledge and sensation arise from experience, from the world of the senses, it was logical to demand a transformation of the environment that would enable man to see it as truly human and that would compel him to cultivate in himself his best moral qualities. From the proposition that enlightened self-interest is the basis of morality it followed that social life should be changed to make private interest coincide with the interests of society, so that a person would observe public interests in the name of his own private interests. The idea that a man's character is the product of his surroundings led to the conclusion that the surroundings themselves should be human. If man was by nature a social being, it followed that he could develop his nature only in a reasonably organised society.

Materialist sensualism, applied to social phenomena, led the French materialists of the 18th century to demand the destruction of the old feudal society and establishment of a new "ideal society", which in the particular historical conditions of its birth turned out to be none other than a bourgeois society.

This same proposition that in order to perfect man his environment had to be perfected led, as we shall see in the next section, to *utopian communism and socialism*.

### 3. Reflection of the Humanist Ideals of Working People in Utopian Communism and Socialism

The development of capitalist relations within the framework of the feudal system was connected with the primary accumulation of capital, with ruthless expropriation, which created an army of the dispossessed who were obliged to

submit to the bondage of wage labour and lead a life of semi-starvation.

The dreams and longings cherished by these oppressed, suffering masses for a better life, a life that would be reasonably and justly organised, the dream of being able to work in freedom, of an abundance of goods evenly distributed among the populace, were reflected in *early utopian communism*.

One of the founders of utopian communism was the outstanding humanist writer of the Renaissance Thomas More. In his famous book about the Island of Utopia he wrote, "The increase of pasture, by which your sheep, which are naturally mild, and easily kept in order, may be said now to devour men, and unpeople, not only villages, but towns."<sup>1</sup>

Thomas More upholds the principle that man is the highest value and protests against his being held "in much less estimation than the gold itself."<sup>2</sup> It is his profound belief that "nothing in the world can be of equal value with a man's life."<sup>3</sup>

It must have taken tremendous strength of mind and soul in a cruel age when masses of people were doomed to starvation for the sake of profit, when the life of the ordinary serf or villein appeared to have little or no value at all to speak out against every form of cruelty and inhumanity and proclaim "pity and good nature, which are the best of those affections that are born with us".<sup>4</sup>

More was roused to indignation by laws that prescribed hanging as the penalty for a poor man who dared to lay hands on another's property. He linked all his schemes for the reorganisation of human society and attaining social justice and the moral regeneration of mankind with the abolition of private property: "...as long as there is any property, and while money is the standard of all other things, I cannot think that a nation can be governed either justly or happily..."<sup>5</sup> The only way for society to prosper was by establishing equality of property, but he saw the

<sup>1</sup> Thomas More, *Utopia*. In: *Ideal Empires and Republics*, Washington and London, 1901, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 183-84.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

attainment of this goal not through egalitarianism, the endowment of each citizen with an equal amount of private property, but through abolishing private property altogether. "... till property is taken away there can be no equitable or just distribution of things, nor can the world be happily governed: for as long as that is maintained, the greatest and the far best part of mankind will be still oppressed with a load of cares and anxieties."<sup>1</sup>

More believed that the abolition of private property and money was necessary in order to perfect the human personality, to cleanse it of all the vices generated by the desire to multiply one's property, to lay hands on more money.

It was natural to assume that, having established equality in respect of property, the citizens of the new society would also establish it in the sphere of law. All citizens of More's *Utopia* are equal before the law, regardless of their social origin. They have equal rights and duties and are free of any forcible imposition of ideas.

On humanist grounds More also condemns wars, which are waged in order to enslave and plunder other nations and bow them to servile dependence on their conqueror. The Utopians, More writes, "detest wars as a very brutal thing."<sup>2</sup> They will go to war only to defend themselves from attack and have no less compassion for the people of other nations than for their own compatriots.

Thomas More's immortal *Utopia* is indeed the golden book of medieval humanism. But, like all subsequent socialists and communists of the utopian variety, More deduced the necessity for a new social system not from the real movement of social life (this would have been impossible in More's time), but out of considerations of expediency and justice, from rationalist and ethical principles.

It must be noted that More was unable to free himself entirely from the prejudices of the class society in which he lived. Contradicting his own statements that the abolition of private property would do away with all vice and crime, More made provision in his ideal state for people, guilty of "shameful deeds" or condemned to death by other peoples

<sup>1</sup> Thomas More, *Utopia*. In: *Ideal Empires and Republics*, Washington and London, 1901, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

for grave crimes, to be put to slavery. "Another sort of slaves are the poor of the neighbouring countries, who offer of their own accord to come and serve them."<sup>1</sup> It stands to reason, however, that Thomas More's contribution to the development of humanist ideas is not to be belittled because of certain contradictory views and prejudices peculiar to his age that he was unable wholly to overcome.

In 1623 the Italian philosopher and utopian communist Tommaso Campanella published his splendid book *City of the Sun*, which expresses the hopes and interests of the masses, their protest against exploitation and bondage, and against the extravagant and corrupt life of the parasitic sections of society. Campanella wrote: "In Naples there exist seventy thousand souls, and out of these scarcely ten or fifteen thousand do any work, and they are always lean from overwork and are getting weaker every day. The rest become a prey to idleness, avarice, ill-health, lasciviousness, usury and other vices, and contaminate and corrupt very many families by holding them in servitude for their own use, by keeping them in poverty and slavishness and by imparting to them their own vices."<sup>2</sup>

Having so clearly pointed out the social ills of his time, Campanella had to give an equally profound reply to the questions: What is the way out of the present situation? How can happiness be made available to everyone? He realised that to bring about a change in "human nature" it was no use relying on the reforming power of "Christian morality", on reforms that left the foundations of society unchanged. Campanella believed the way to an essential improvement in the life of the masses lay through radical social reform, the abolition of private property, the destruction of a social system in which the minority enjoyed all the good things of life while compelling the majority to work for them.

In his utopian *City of the Sun* all that is of value belongs to the whole of society on principles of equality for all citizens. Not only the means of production and the things which they produce are common property; knowledge,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> Campanella, *City of the Sun*. In: *Ideal Empires and Republics*, Washington and London, 1901, pp. 293-94.



honours and pleasures are also available to all. The people of this city have rid themselves of self-love and have only love of the community, which guarantees the preservation and increase of social property. In the City of the Sun "...all the rich and poor make up the community. They are rich because they want nothing, poor because they possess nothing: and consequently they are not slaves to circumstances, but circumstances serve them."<sup>1</sup> Everyone works in Campanella's utopian society; there is almost a worship of work. Members of society have long since forgotten the time when people were respected not for their personal merits but for their "noble" birth, "...and they consider him the more noble and renowned who has dedicated himself to the study of the most arts and knows how to practice them wisely. Wherefore they laugh at us in that we consider our workmen ignoble, and hold those to be noble who have mastered no pursuit; but live in ease, and are so many slaves given over to their own pleasure and lasciviousness; and thus, as it were, from a school so many idle and wicked fellows go forth for the ruin of the state."<sup>2</sup>

Science and art are accessible to all citizens. Everything is done to bring their attainments within the reach of all and this is made easier by the fact that citizens work only four hours a day and have plenty of leisure to spend on agreeable scientific studies, discussion of art and the acquisition of knowledge that will serve them in life.

Campanella raises the question of the harmonious combination of mental and physical labour. All the inhabitants of the City of the Sun perform both and the variety makes their work a pleasant and joyful duty.

The transformation of social relationships brings in its train a substantial change in people's moral make-up. In the City of the Sun there are no breeding grounds for crime. Its citizens are wholly opposed to idleness, falsehood, and racial and religious intolerance. Their wise men produce inventions "for the benefit of the state and all nations of the world."<sup>3</sup> They sing "the deeds of the Christian, Jewish and Gentile heroes and of those of all

<sup>1</sup> Campanella, *City of the Sun*. In: *Ideal Empires and Republics*, Washington and London, 1901, p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313.

other nations, and this is very delightful to them. Forsooth no one is envious of another".<sup>1</sup>

Campanella's humanism, based on the principles of utopian communism, suffers from many of the historically conditioned defects and limitations of More's. Like More, in the 14th century, Campanella was naturally unable, in the conditions of the 16th-17th centuries, when capitalism was still in the early stage of its development, to trace the objective grounds for the emergence of communist society, to see the forces destined to build it, and he had no alternative but to deduce the necessity for communism from abstract considerations of reason and justice.

It should be noted, however, that Campanella's ideal is in many respects more consistent than that of More. The *City of the Sun* permits no exceptions whatever to the rule of absolute social equality. Any form of forced labour, even as punishment for violation of the public interest, is utterly impermissible. Admittedly, Campanella has his prejudices, which make themselves felt in his description of the city's social system. Thus, he associates with communism the existence of a theocracy, which regiments the life of all the citizens down to the smallest detail. A number of other features that show the limitations of Campanella's communism could be mentioned, but even so one must stress also the historical greatness of his humanism, his brilliant insight that the flowering of the individual, his happiness and well-being, depend on the abolition of private property and the organisation of social life on the principles of social property, work in common, and equitable distribution of the material and spiritual values thus produced.

The humanism of More and Campanella was a bold but, in their day, unrealisable dream of the distant future, of the man of the future, liberated at last from the chains of a society made up of antagonistic classes. The very desire to introduce social property in a period when the historical requisites for it had not yet matured was obviously utopian and for this reason, despite its greatness and nobility, the communist ideal of More and Campanella and the humanism associated with it had no practical significance in the period under review.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313.

A remarkable figure in the French utopian communism of the 18th century was Jean Meslier. Meslier associated the achievement of human happiness and establishment of truly humane relations not only with the destruction of despotism and feudal relationships but with the abolition of all private-property relations in general. Listing the abuses encouraged by the enslavement of the common people (excessive concentration of power in the hands of a few, the parasitic life of the feudal lords, spiritual and temporal), he declares: "Another abuse, accepted and legalised nearly all over the world, lies in the fact that people appropriate unto themselves in private property the goods and riches of the earth whereas they should be owned by everyone in common."<sup>1</sup> Like Campanella, Meslier showed the terrible power of private property to deform everything human in man, to make him greedy and ready to go to any lengths to increase his goods. Private property, he wrote, crushes even elementary honesty and decency, stifles the sense of compassion and mutual help, inflames bestial instincts and habits; it separates people from one another, makes them rivals and enemies and undermines their common interests.

For the majority of people private property is a source of misfortune. "Let us see," Meslier writes, "what is the result of this distribution of the goods and riches of the earth as private property, to be used by each, separately and apart, as he pleases? The result is that each man seeks to obtain as much as possible for himself by any means, good or bad; for greed is insatiable and, as we know, it is the root of all evil. When it is given full scope to indulge itself, it misses no opportunity and forces men to go to any lengths. . . . So it comes about that the strongest, most cunning and adroit people, and often the most wicked and unworthy, are better provided than anyone else with land and all the conveniences of life."<sup>2</sup>

Meslier is sufficiently explicit in developing the thought that while private property and property inequality continue to exist, all talk of liberty and fraternity will remain so many empty phrases. The same idea is defended in one

<sup>1</sup> Jean Meslier, *Le Testament*, Amsterdam, 1864, t. II, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 211-12.

form or another by the Hébertists and, later, by the supporters of Babeuf. Thus, Pierre Sylvain Maréchal, author of the main programme of revolutionary Babeufism, *Manifesto of the Equals* even during the period of Jacobin dictatorship criticised Robespierre and his supporters for their over-respectful attitude to private property. In his *Correctif à la révolution* published anonymously in 1793, he declares: "Liberty and human rights, equality, and the rights of citizens—we know all this by heart. They are familiar words and they are mouthed even by babes in arms. But do people enjoy these rights and are they duly implemented? Have we become any happier? No, alas! And why not? Because we have not become better. And we have not become better because we do not make our conduct and our habits accord with our principles."<sup>1</sup> What unrealised principles did Maréchal have in mind? The abolition of private property, the principle of property equality, the abolition of a social system based on rich and poor. "While there are masters and servants, rich and poor . . . there can be neither liberty nor equality."<sup>2</sup> Such was Maréchal's firm conviction and he tirelessly asserts on page after page of his book that "the revolution is by no means completed".

These ideas reflected the mood and aspirations of the mass of the people, particularly its proletarian and semi-proletarian sections, who were disillusioned with bourgeois revolution.

The connection between Babeufism and the working masses emerged in the form of an organised movement, the movement of the "equals", whose aim was to overthrow capitalism and set up a society based on the principles of egalitarian communism.

Historically progressive though they were, the humanist ideas of Babeufism, like the whole system of egalitarian communism, were utopian in character. Babeuf envisaged communist society as purely agrarian. Unaware of the significance of the objective laws of historical development and the historical role of the proletariat, Babeufism deduced the necessity for communism from its being in keeping with

<sup>1</sup> *Correctif à la révolution*, Paris, 1793, pp. 306-307.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307.



human nature. In the final analysis, this was due to the low level of development of capitalism and of the class consciousness of the workers.

In the 19th century the humanist ideas and aspirations of the masses found expression and development in the work of such great utopian socialists as Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen and their associates.

As capitalism developed, its contradictions intensified and its built-in mechanism of exploitation, its basic hostility to the mass of the working people, became more and more obvious. The historical significance of 19th-century utopian socialism lay precisely in its clear and incisive criticism of the capitalist system.

The utopian socialism of the 19th century revealed the gap between the humanist ideas and slogans of the bourgeois revolution and the emerging capitalist reality. Instead of liberty, equality and fraternity, capitalism brought new forms of social inequality, the rat race of competition and subjection of one man to another. Fourier, wrote Engels, "... takes the bourgeoisie, their inspired prophets, before the Revolution, and their interested eulogists after it, at their own word. He lays bare remorselessly the material and moral misery of the bourgeois world. He confronts it with the earlier philosophers' dazzling promises of a society in which reason alone should reign, of a civilisation in which happiness should be universal, of an illimitable human perfectibility, and with the rose-coloured phraseology of the bourgeois ideologists of his time. He points out how everywhere the most pitiful reality corresponds with the most high-sounding phrases, and he overwhelms this hopeless fiasco of phrases with his mordant sarcasm."<sup>1</sup>

Under capitalist conditions the freedom extolled by bourgeois philosophers was indeed reserved only for those who had gained control of the implements and means of production. The system of "civilisation", as Fourier wrote, had become the tyranny of private property over the masses. The greater part of the nation was compelled by fear of starvation to submit to hired slavery, to sell their labour to earn enough to live on. Such civilisation meant that

abundance gave rise to poverty. Attacking the upholders of the capitalist system, Fourier pointed out that they had forgotten to make one of their principles the right to work in freedom, a principle which was unrealisable under "civilisation" but without which all other human rights were valueless. Under capitalist conditions there was no joy in labour because it was merely a means of enriching some people while causing the physical and moral degeneration of others. All wage labourers, Fourier wrote in his *Du garantisme*, "rise up against labour that merely feeds the pleasure of a handful of rich men and leaves the working people nothing but a life of hardship, slavery and despair, a life that horrifies even the savage...."

Fourier frequently stressed that capitalism could continue to exist only through violence and deception because its whole essence contradicted elementary humanism. It was a system that provided the ruling classes with every facility for pleasure while depriving the majority of citizens of all joy. "The upper classes," Fourier further wrote, "armed with power, drum it into the people that they are born only for suffering. They maintain this dogma by fear of the gallows, which is the inevitable fate of those unfortunates who dare to protest against their poverty and demand their natural rights."

Saint-Simon and Owen exposed the incurable ills of the capitalist system with equal boldness. They wrote of the poverty and lack of rights of the overwhelming majority of citizens, of the growing antagonism between rich and poor. They both concluded that the people who created all values, whose labour ensured the existence and progress of society, were themselves deprived of all benefits and joys. The machine, which could become man's greatest blessing, wrote Owen, had under capitalism become his greatest curse.

While pointing out the immense suffering that capitalism had brought in its train, the great utopian socialists were far from drawing pessimistic conclusions. Capitalism, they held, was only a link in the general chain of historical development. It was bound to yield place to a more just and reasonable society, which would put an end to poverty, exploitation, ignorance and moral degradation and create conditions for man's physical and spiritual rebirth. "This

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, pp. 121-22.

change will root up and utterly destroy the old vicious and miserable system of ignorance, poverty, individual competition, and contests, and of national war, throughout the world; and will introduce, in place thereof, the rational system of society in which competition, strife, and wars, will cease for ever, and all will be trained, from infancy, solely to promote each other's happiness."<sup>1</sup>

Utopian socialism produced a whole series of brilliant and profound ideas that promoted the development of scientific communism.

The creation of abundance and the harmonious development of man, said the utopian socialists, required that all members of society should work. In the society of the future, wrote Saint-Simon, people would work according to their abilities and receive from society according to the quantity and quality of their work. The famous principle of the first phase of communist society was originally formulated by Saint-Simonism in the following words: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his deeds."

The utopian socialists systematically and sharply criticised the individualism and extreme selfishness that predominated in bourgeois society. While stressing the great importance of human passions, they tried to find means of guiding them into the right channel, of making enlightened self-interest act in the interests of society as a whole, seeing this as the right way to satisfy the interests of the individual.

Following the French materialists of the 18th century, the utopian socialists also insisted on the need for the harmonious blending of private and public interests. But they sought to achieve this goal by different means from those of their predecessors. Helvetius, Diderot and Holbach had associated the possibility of combining private and public interests with the destruction of feudalism and absolutism, with the establishment of a "reasonable system", which turned out to be capitalism. The utopian socialists, on the other hand, having experienced the evils of capitalism, sincerely hoped for its complete destruction (Owen) or, at

<sup>1</sup> Robert Owen, *The Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race; or, the Coming Change from Irrationality to Rationality*, London, 1849, p. 56.

least, the resolute bridling of its destructive, anti-human forces (Saint-Simon, Fourier).

The utopian socialists expressed a number of profound ideas concerning the conditions for the victory of the humanist morality of the future. Taking their cue from the French materialists on the role of the environment in moulding the personality, they maintained that to bring about a change in man's moral conduct one must first of all change the social conditions of his existence. People could not be talked into acting morally and loving their fellow human beings while the existing conditions compelled them to win their own personal happiness at the expense of others' suffering.

Utopian socialism is of immense historical and theoretical significance. It was one of the theoretical sources of Marxism. And yet, owing to the historical conditions of those days it was unable to give scientific expression to the humanist ideals of the mass of the people.

Failing to perceive the objective laws of the development and collapse of capitalism and the subsequent victory of communism, the utopian socialists tried to find grounds for this victory in the ideas of reason and justice.

Fourier and Saint-Simon did not connect the establishment of socialism with the abolition of private property and, consequently, of class contradictions. They mistakenly believed that all the negative results of the existence of private property could be neutralised by elaborate social legislation. Only Robert Owen could not conceive the future communist society without the abolition of private property. But he, too, utopian that he was, assumed that communist society could be built through mutual understanding and co-operation between all classes of society without a class struggle and revolution to overthrow the old system.

Naturally enough, the utopian socialists failed to understand the historical role of the proletariat. The working class, which in this period was poorly developed and badly organised, was regarded merely as a suffering mass.

Fourier, Owen and Saint-Simon, therefore, argued that socialism could be achieved through the good will of enlightened people or even the capitalists themselves, and naively appealed to their reason and sense of justice.



The study of pre-Marxist social thought in Russia shows that the ideals of the mass of the people were profoundly expressed in the revolutionary-democratic ideology whose outstanding exponents were Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov and their followers.

The views developed by these revolutionary democrats reflected the interests of the masses oppressed by serfdom and tsarist despotism and, despite the natural continuity between them and the humanism of the French materialists of the 18th century, of Feuerbach and the utopian socialists, the humanism of the Russian revolutionary democrats was bound to have certain distinctive features of its own. In their works, particularly those of Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky, man is not treated as a naturalistic abstraction, as in Feuerbach, but as an individual living in specific historical conditions.

The revolutionary democrats considered man in his organic unity with the social environment and stressed the fact that human society is divided into classes with different aspirations and interests. While acknowledging the part played by environment, they stressed the active role of the subject of historical action, the role played by people. "Events create people," wrote Alexander Herzen, "as much as people create events. This is not fatalism but the interaction of elements of a continuing process, the unconscious side of which can change consciousness..."<sup>1</sup>

Nikolai Dobrolyubov wrote in the same spirit of the significance of the laws of historical development and stressed the role of people in the development of society. "Recognising the immutable laws of historical development," he wrote, "people of the present generation do not place unrealisable hopes in themselves, do not imagine that they can arbitrarily remake history, do not regard themselves as immune to the influence of circumstance. But at the same time they by no means succumb to apathy and insensibility, because they are also aware of their own significance."<sup>2</sup>

Revolutionary-democratic humanism championed not man in general but primarily the essential rights of the toilers, the freedom of the serf, the creation of truly human conditions for his existence and development.

<sup>1</sup> A. I. Herzen, *Works*, Vol. 19, p. 174 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> N. A. Dobrolyubov, *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 62 (in Russian).

When Dobrolyubov wrote that in tsarist Russia "...human dignity, freedom of the individual, faith in love and happiness and the holy shrine of honest labour have been cast down and arrogantly trampled in the dust",<sup>1</sup> he had in mind above all the oppressed peasantry. It was the man of toil, his present and future, the ways of achieving his freedom and happiness that formed the focus of Russian revolutionary-democratic humanism. "The Russian people are for us more than our native land," wrote Herzen. "We see in them the soil in which a new system of state will develop, soil that far from being stale and exhausted holds all the seeds of renewal, all the conditions of development."<sup>2</sup>

At the same time Herzen, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky and their supporters had profound respect for other peoples and expressed concern for their present and future. Herzen wrote a whole series of articles about the hardships endured by the peoples of Europe, about slavery and peonage in the Northern and Southern states of North America.

In one of the darkest periods of the history of tsarist Russia, when many of the world's great thinkers had lost hope of any possibility of changing the order of things and succumbed to pessimism, the exponents of Russian revolutionary-democratic humanism maintained a deep faith in the people, in their reason and strength of will. Chernyshevsky wrote: "...the future is bright and splendid. Love it, strive towards it, work for it, bring it nearer, bring as much of it into the present as can be brought."<sup>3</sup> And when Herzen showed a lack of faith in the European peoples, Chernyshevsky insisted categorically, in reply: "The present condition of the masses in the most advanced countries is sufficient evidence that they have up to now scarcely lived a historical life but have continued as from time immemorial to drowse in the same infant slumber that enfolds your beloved young countries. ... Only a negligible fraction of the population of any advanced country could have exhausted its strength, whereas if one takes the whole people of that

<sup>1</sup> N. A. Dobrolyubov, *Collected Works* (in nine volumes), Vol. 5, Moscow-Leningrad, 1962, p. 33 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> A. I. Herzen, *Works*, Vol. 16, p. 9 (in Russian).

<sup>3</sup> N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works* (in fifteen volumes), Vol. XI, Moscow, 1939, pp. 283-84 (in Russian).

country it must be said that they are only just preparing to set foot on the historical stage. . . . It is early, far too early to talk about the senility of the European peoples. They are only just beginning to live."<sup>1</sup>

The humanism of Chernyshevsky and his associates was not confined to the demand for granting citizens equal rights, destroying feudal privileges and making all men equal before the law. Russia's revolutionary democrats mounted their attack not only against feudalism but against capitalist exploitation as well. They defended the socialist ideal, advocating not merely legal but property equality; they demanded that a man's status in society should be determined by his personal merits and that material goods should be allotted to each person in strict proportion to the quality and nature of his work.

"Man needs happiness," Dobrolyubov wrote, "he has the right to it and he should attain it at all costs.

"Happiness—no matter what it consists in for each person individually—is possible only when his prime material needs are satisfied, when his present state is provided for. . . . If the present social relations do not conform to the demand for supreme justice and do not satisfy the strivings for happiness of which we are aware, it would seem to be obvious that these relations need to be changed."<sup>2</sup>

When they talked of a radical change in the existing relations, the revolutionary democrats meant the destruction of the system of exploitation and transition to a socialist system.

Admittedly, their goal was socialism on the basis of the peasant village commune, a variety of utopian socialism. The revolutionary democrats mistakenly assumed that Russia could bypass the capitalist stage of development and were unable to perceive in the working class the chief motive force in the struggle for socialism.

In considering revolutionary-democratic humanism we must pause for a moment over its attitude to the revolutionary use of force. Chernyshevsky and his friends would, of

course, have preferred to achieve their ends by peaceful means, but life convinced them that the ruthless tsarist authorities that guarded the interests of the serf-owners would always crush any attempt to change the existing order of things with extreme cruelty.

Despite the fact that the revolutionary democrats did not adopt the standpoint of a materialist understanding of history, classes and the class struggle, their works, as Lenin wrote, breathe the spirit of class struggle. This feature also fully revealed itself in their understanding of the way to achieve human freedom and happiness. While Fourier, Saint-Simon and Owen denied the class struggle and placed their hopes on obtaining co-operation from the ruling classes to establish a reasonable and just social order, the Russian revolutionary democrats believed in the masses as the motive force of social development and called upon Russia to "take up the axe".

"... It is absurd even to think," wrote Belinsky, referring to the future victory of socialism, "that this can come about by itself, in the course of time, without a revolution carried out by force, without bloodshed."<sup>1</sup> Belinsky associated the very sense of human dignity with armed struggle against serfdom and tsarism.

This was how the Russian revolutionary democrats cast off lacrimose, sentimental, passive humanism with its abstract love of man, its empty exhortations to self-perfection, its appeals to supernatural forces. The revolutionary effectiveness of the humanism of these Russian progressive militant thinkers was well expressed by Belinsky in his famous letter to Gogol: "Russia sees her salvation not in mysticism nor in asceticism . . . but in the successes of civilisation, enlightenment and humanity. What she needs is not sermons (she has heard enough of them!), or prayers (she has repeated them too often), but the awakening in the people of a sense of their human dignity. . . ."<sup>2</sup> Belinsky followed this up with an appeal for the abolition of serfdom as the first task. The establishment of the socialist system was the supreme goal,

<sup>1</sup> N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works* (in fifteen volumes), Vol. VII, Moscow, 1939, p. 655.

<sup>2</sup> N. A. Dobrolyubov, *Collected Works* (in nine volumes), Vol. 4, Moscow-Leningrad, 1962, pp. 371-72 (in Russian).

<sup>1</sup> V. G. Belinsky, *Selected Correspondence* (in two volumes), Vol. 2, Moscow, 1955, p. 173 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> V. G. Belinsky, *Works* (in three volumes), Vol. 3, Moscow, 1948, p. 708 (in Russian).



the radical solution to the problems confronting the enslaved people.

This and other features of Russian revolutionary-democratic humanism provide good grounds for considering it the highest form of pre-Marxist humanism.

Like the West European utopians, the Russian revolutionary democrats expressed splendid insights, stimulating and fruitful ideas about man's position and calling in the socialist society of the future, and the conditions for the development of the individual. These thoughts have retained their importance to this day.

## CHAPTER TWO

### FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST THEORY OF HUMANISM

#### 1. Problem of Humanism in the Early Works of Karl Marx

The humanist ideals of the masses found consistently scientific expression in Marxism-Leninism, in the ideology of the proletariat.

The founders of Marxism-Leninism took a new approach to the problem of man, his essential worth, purpose in life, his rights and freedoms, the conditions for his all-round and harmonious development, and the other problems implied by humanism, all of which were for the first time posed and solved on the basis of a consistent, scientific understanding of history, from the standpoint of the most revolutionary of all classes—the proletariat.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels defended humanist ideas from the very outset of their literary-political and scientific activity, even before they arrived at the materialist understanding of history and scientific communism. In his first articles for the *Rheinische Zeitung* Marx set out to defend the interests of the politically and socially deprived masses.

In the summer of 1843, Marx wrote his "From the Criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of Law", which was essentially his first step in the direction of dialectical and historical materialism.

Though his point of departure was the ideological legacy of utopian socialism, Marx even in this period towered above his predecessors. He wrote of the significance of the political struggle of the masses, saw it as the condition of their emancipation, and enunciated the importance of revolutionary theory, the role of the people as the true creator of the state system.

"We are developing for the world new principles from its own old principles. We do not say to the world: 'Stop struggling; all your struggle is to no avail.' We give the world a true slogan of struggle."<sup>1</sup>

Marx's articles for the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbüchern* are of great importance for the development of Marxist humanism.

In his article "On the Jewish Question" he writes of the anti-humanist essence of bourgeois society, where everything rests on the principle of buying and selling. In a society dominated by private property, money deforms human relations, throws down all human gods from on high and turns them into objects of barter, turns man himself into an object of barter. In bourgeois society money is tender for all things. "It has therefore deprived the whole world—both the world of man and nature—of its own value. Money is the essence of his labour and activity which has been alienated from him; and this alien essence commands man and man bows down before it."<sup>2</sup>

Marx continues to develop these thoughts, as we shall see later, in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, in subsequent economic research and particularly in *Capital* on the basis of analysis of the objective laws of capitalist society.

In his article "On the Jewish Question" Marx draws a distinction between the political emancipation of the individual and human emancipation. Speaking of the political emancipation of the individual by the bourgeois revolution, Marx writes that although it was a great step forward it was not "the final form of human emancipation in general."<sup>3</sup>

In his "From the Criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction", which he began in 1843 and completed in 1844 Marx for the first time links human emancipation with the proletariat's struggle to abolish private property. Only the proletariat, that "social head and social heart of society",<sup>4</sup> the class in whose situation all the defects, all the

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Briefe aus den "Deutsch-Französische Jahrbüchern"*, Marx/Engels, *Werke*, 1969, Bd. 1, S. 345.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, "Zur Judenfrage", Marx/Engels, *Werke*, 1969, Bd. 1, S. 375.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, S. 356.

<sup>4</sup> Karl Marx, "Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung", Marx/Engels, *Werke*, 1969, Bd. 1, S. 388.

oppression and all the rightlessness of society are concentrated is capable of consistent, bold and self-sacrificing struggle.

Being the ideologist of this genuinely revolutionary class, Marx enunciated the remarkable idea: "As philosophy finds its *material* weapon in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its spiritual weapon in philosophy. And once the lightning of thought has squarely struck this ingenuous soil of the people, the emancipation of *Germans* into *men* will be accomplished."<sup>4</sup>

Marx exposes the illusory nature of Christian humanism, shows that religion is the opiate of the people, poisoning their consciousness with the promise of bliss in the next world. He writes of the need to free man from his illusions, to help him to think, to act, to bring him back to reality: "The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is required for their *real* happiness. The demand to give up the illusions about its condition is the *demand to give up a condition which needs illusion*."<sup>2</sup>

The idea of the historical mission of the proletariat, of the social revolution as a condition for the realisation of humanist ideals is further developed in the criticism Marx gives to A. Ruge's bourgeois liberalism in his "Critical Notes on the Articles 'The Prussian' and 'The Prussian King and Social Reform'".

It is characteristic that already in this period of the formation of the Marxist conception of humanism Marx rises above Feuerbach's anthropologism. "Every revolution destroys the *old society*, and to this extent it is *social*," he emphasises. "Every revolution overthrows the *old power*, and to this extent it is *political* in character. . . . Revolution in general—the *overthrow* of the existing power and the destruction of the old relations—is a *political act*. But *socialism* cannot be brought into being without a *revolution*. It needs this *political act* just as much as it needs the *destruction* and *overthrow* of the old system."<sup>3</sup>

Marx's articles in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbüchern*

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 392.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>3</sup> Karl Marx, "Kritische Randglossen zu dem Artikel", *Der König von Preussen und die Sozialreform von einem Preussen*, Marx/Engels, *Werke*, 1969, Bd. 1, S. 409.



form an important stage in his transition from idealism to materialism and from revolutionary democracy to scientific communism.

"Marx's articles in this journal," Lenin wrote, "showed that he was already a revolutionary, who advocated 'merciless criticism of everything existing', and in particular the 'criticism by weapon', and appealed to the *masses* and to the proletariat."<sup>1</sup>

The *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, written between March and September 1844, occupy a special place in the formation of Marxist humanism.

In this work Marx makes the first full statement of the problem of man, the problem of humanism.<sup>2</sup> The influence of Feuerbach, however, is still evident. In his analysis of the problem Marx also makes wide use of Hegelian terminology, particularly the concept of "alienation".

Taking advantage of this fact and distorting Marx's understanding of alienation, bourgeois ideologists and their supporters maintain that Marx's humanism was based on the anthropological principle and implied the Hegelian interpretation of alienation, and that upon arriving at a materialist understanding of history Marx renounced humanism altogether.

In reality Marx did borrow the concept of "alienation" from the philosophy of Hegel and Feuerbach, but gave it a different and quite new meaning.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Up to 1927, the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* were kept in the archives of the German Social-Democrats and were entirely unknown. In 1927, they were partially published in the USSR in the *Marx and Engels Archives* as an Introduction to the *Holy Family*. In 1929, they appeared in the same form in the third volume of the *Collected Works* of Marx and Engels published in Russian in the USSR. In 1956, the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* were published in a collection of the early works of Marx and Engels. Philosophical analysis of the *Manuscripts* is provided in a number of works by Soviet Marxists, particularly those of T. I. Oizerman, *The Formation of the Philosophy of Marxism*, L. N. Pazhitnov, *At the Sources of the Revolutionary Upheaval in Philosophy*, in a brochure by E. M. Sitnikov, *The "Problem of Alienation" in Bourgeois Philosophy and the Falsifiers of Marxism*, in a collection of reports of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism on the evolution of the world outlook of Marx and Engels, and in various articles published in the magazines *Problems of Philosophy* and *Philosophic Sciences*.

In Hegelian philosophy this concept was theological and mystical in character. It expressed a stage in the development and self-cognition of the "universal spirit". The "absolute", "universal" spirit, in developing, alienates from itself nature and man, creates them, "objectifies" them and, having passed through the whole history of culture, finally comes to know itself in Hegelian philosophy, thus "deobjectifying" itself.

"The history of the spirit," Hegel writes, "is its *activity* because it is only that which it does, and its activity... is at the same time its alienation."<sup>1</sup> Thus what Hegel means is the alienation of self-consciousness.

Despite this mystical form and the fact that he is in essence expressing the idea of the creation of the world by God, Hegel, in explaining the process of the development of the spirit, the process of its "objectification" and subsequent "deobjectification", at the same time enunciated a number of valuable ideas, including some about the social essence of man, the role of his labour, the dialectical character of cognition, and so on.

Feuerbach also resorted to the category of alienation, which he used mainly in criticising religion. Feuerbach showed that all the qualities that religion attributes to God—wisdom, power, love, kindness, etc.—are nothing but the qualities of man himself, alienated from him and endowed with supernatural powers.

Marx uses the concept of alienation in analysing the problem of man. But his is not the abstract man of Feuerbach. In his article "On the Jewish Question" Marx is already applying the concept of alienation to the position of the working individual. Revealing the demonic power of money in society based on private property, he regards it as the "essence of his labour and his being",<sup>2</sup> alienated from man and enslaving him.

Developing this idea in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx analyses the process of alienation of the worker in capitalist society in its socio-economic and philosophical aspects. This essential principle of inves-

<sup>1</sup> Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, Berlin, 1840, S. 423.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, "Zur Judenfrage", Marx/Engels, *Werke*, 1969, Bd. 1, S. 375.

tigation, like other important socio-political conclusions connected with previous and subsequent works, is completely ignored by bourgeois ideologists and their reformist or revisionist supporters.

Analysing the bourgeois society of his day in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx draws the conclusion that dominated, as it is, by private property this society leads to the enslavement of the worker by the products of his own labour. He regards this process as a result of the alienation of the product of labour from the producer. The worker is reduced to the level of a commodity, and the cheapest of all commodities at that; the worker's poverty is inversely proportional to the power and dimensions of his production. The statement of this fact was not new in itself; one has only to recall the brilliant criticism of capitalist reality by the utopian socialists. But Marx did not stop at that level of criticism. He went further and higher than his predecessors.

Revealing the antithesis between the increase in value of the things produced by the worker and the devaluation of his human nature in the conditions of bourgeois society, Marx shows that private property is the enemy of the worker, of all who are deprived of it. "The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and range. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates. With the *increasing value* of the world of things proceeds in direct proportion the *devaluation* of the world of men. Labour produces not only commodities; it produces itself and the worker as a *commodity*—and does so in the proportion in which it produces commodities generally."<sup>1</sup>

Continuing his analysis of the social antagonism generated by private property, Marx uses the concept of alienation to expose more vividly the hostility of private property towards the worker. He reaches the conclusion that the object produced by labour under conditions where property is owned privately stands in opposition to labour as something alien to it, as a force that no longer depends on the producer.

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1967, p. 66.

Marx stated this in an exceptionally convincing passage: "The laws of political economy express the estrangement of the worker in his object thus: the more the worker produces, the less he has to consume; the more values he creates, the more valueless, the more unworthy he becomes... the mightier labour becomes, the more powerless becomes the worker; the more ingenious labour becomes, the duller becomes the worker and the more he becomes nature's bondsman."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the enslavement of the workers in the conditions of a society based on private property by the products of his labour or, in other words, the alienation of the worker in respect of his attitude to the products of his labour, is the expression of the self-alienation of labour.

What exactly does self-alienation of labour mean?

In the first place, it means that labour dominated by private property is of a compulsory nature. For the worker it is something external. It is not the satisfaction of his own urge to work but merely a means of bringing satisfaction to others. Private property distorts the character of labour, its constructive, creative role. As Marx puts it, it is external labour, labour in the process of which man alienates himself and sacrifices himself, violates his nature.

Resorting to the analogy of religious alienation, Marx says that just as in religion the spontaneous action of the human imagination affects the individual independently of himself, i.e., as a kind of alien activity, divine or diabolical, the activity of the worker is not self-activity. "It belongs to another; it is the loss of his self."<sup>2</sup> It would seem that already in the *Manuscripts* Marx regarded alienation as the result of people's social activity conditioned by the specific historical relations of private property. Marx's historic merit lies in the fact that he revealed not only the economic but also the social basis of the process of alienation and proved that at the root of alienation as a politico-economic fact lie the private property relations between people.

If the product of labour does not belong to the worker, then it belongs to someone else, who is not a worker; whereas the activity of the worker is torture for him, it must

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.



bring pleasure to another. This other person, says Marx, is the capitalist, the owner of labour. "The relationship of the worker to labour engenders the relation to it of the capitalist."<sup>1</sup>

Summing up his analysis, Marx expresses some very profound ideas: "... man's relation to himself only becomes *objective* and *real* for him through his relation to the other man.... In the real practical world self-estrangement can only become manifest through the real practical relationship to other men. The medium through which alienation takes place is itself *practical*."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, in contrast to bourgeois political economy Marx shows that one must see beyond economic categories to the relations between people. In so doing, he comes close to an understanding of the role of production relations in the life of society. This is the tremendous theoretical significance of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*.

"The direct relationship of labour to its produce is the relationship of the worker to the objects of his production. The relationship of the man of means to the objects of production and to production itself is only a consequence of this first relationship—and confirms it.... When we ask, then, what is the essential relationship of labour we are asking about the relationship of the *worker* to production."<sup>3</sup>

Working from this proposition, Marx reaches the conclusion that "...the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and every relation of servitude is but a modification and consequence of this relation."<sup>4</sup> Consequently the source of alienation, that peculiar form of human servitude, is in the final analysis the worker's relation to production.

Marx examines the problem of man, of humanism, on both the economic and social levels from the standpoint of the social relations engendered by private property. Exposing the hostility of the society based on private property towards man, Marx poses the problem of man's needs and the conditions of his existence. "...This alienation

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1967, pp. 75-76.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

manifests itself in that it produces refinement of needs and of their means on the one hand, and a bestial barbarisation, a complete, unrefined, abstract simplicity of need, on the other; or rather, in that it merely resurrects itself in its opposite. Even the need for fresh air ceases for the worker.... A dwelling in the *light*, which Prometheus in Aeschylus designated as one of the greatest boons, by means of which he made the savage into a human being, ceases to exist for the worker."<sup>1</sup>

Of tremendous interest are the propositions advanced in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* which reveal the alienated character of the whole set-up of capitalist social relations.

Here Marx has not yet formulated his classical proposition on commodity fetishism, but how close to it in idea are his thoughts on alienation, on the domination exercised by this "inhuman power" over people, including the capitalists themselves! "The capitalist possesses this power, not on account of his personal or human qualities but inasmuch as he is an *owner* of capital. His power is the *purchasing* power of his capital, which nothing can withstand."<sup>2</sup>

Marx devotes a number of pages of the *Manuscripts* to an analysis of class antagonism in society, to a criticism of the reactionary role played by bourgeois political economy, morality and art in expounding and justifying the position of the worker.

Marx criticises bourgeois political economy, which identifies the essence of the worker as a man with his quality as "living capital", as a commodity. The value of the worker as capital increases or decreases in accordance with supply and demand, and even his physical existence, his life is regarded in the system of capital as the supply of a commodity, just any other commodity is so regarded.

Bourgeois political economy dehumanises the worker.

It assumes that the worker possesses only those human qualities that are needed by capital, which is alien to him.

For the capitalist the worker has existence not as a man but only as a worker because if he has no work he can safely be allowed to die of starvation. Thus for bourgeois political

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

economy the need of the worker becomes only a need to maintain the worker during his working life at a level that will ensure that the generation of workers does not die out. Wages have the same significance as the maintenance and running costs of any other instrument of production, as a lubricant used to keep wheels moving. Capitalist production produces man not only as a commodity but also as a being that is spiritually and physically dehumanised.

\* \* \*

On the basis of his economic and social analysis of the concept of alienation Marx poses the major philosophical problem of humanism, the problem of the human essence and activity of the worker and the conditions of his existence. In so doing he makes use of Feuerbach's concepts of "species", "man's species property", "man as a species being" and so on. Bourgeois ideologists, however, taking advantage of this purely terminological similarity, identify Marxist humanism with that of Feuerbach and deny the new substance that Marx breathes into these concepts.

"*Man's species being*," Marx wrote, "both nature and his spiritual species property, turns into a being *alien* to him, into a *means* to his *individual existence*. It estranges man's own body from him, as it does external nature and his spiritual essence, his human being."<sup>1</sup>

Even in Feuerbach's terminology this passage expressed the profound idea of the gap between man's essence and his life-activity, the idea of the latter being reduced to mere existence as a worker owing to the domination of private property. Of man as a conscious being, of his free activity Marx writes: "Estranged labour reverses this relationship, so that it is just because man is a conscious being that he makes his life-activity, his *essential* being a mere means to his *existence*."<sup>2</sup>

These quotations show that Marx does not identify man's essence with his existence. Although in this period he had not yet reached an understanding of the essence of man as the totality of social relations, he had already risen above

Feuerbach. Using what appears to be Feuerbach's expression "man's self-realisation as a conscious species being", Marx, unlike Feuerbach, *associates the essence of man with his life-activity as a social being, with his practical creation of the object world*. He interprets man's essence in the sense of active transformation of the material world, the "processing of the object world", in the sense of the creative character of labour, in the process of which man himself, his abilities, take shape and develop and his very essence unfolds and becomes richer.

Marx thus links man's essence with his activity as a creator of material and spiritual values, with his role as a social being. "...Again when I am active *scientifically*, etc.," he writes, "when I am engaged in activity which I can seldom perform in direct community with others—then I am *social*, because I am active as a *man*. Not only is the material of my activity given to me as a social product (as is even the language in which the thinker is active): my *own* existence is social activity, and therefore that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the Feuerbach concept of "man as a species being" that Marx uses is not to be identified with Feuerbach's anthropologism and the similarity is, in fact, purely external and terminological in character. The concepts of "species" and "species and individual life" in Marx go beyond the interpretation of the species merely as a biological factor and man as an anthropological being.

Unlike Feuerbach, Marx stresses man's social being. "The individual is the *social being*. His life, even if it may not appear in the direct form of a communal life carried out together, with others—is therefore an expression and confirmation of *social life*."<sup>2</sup>

The pages of the *Manuscripts* dealing with man's essential being are a kind of philosophical hymn to man, his role and purpose in life, and this is their tremendous humanistic significance. Marx brilliantly revealed the conflict between the essence of the worker as a man and the conditions of his existence, showed that capitalism deprives man of conditions

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.



for manifesting his social nature, developing his human essence, his creative abilities and reduces his life merely to maintaining his personal "individual existence".

Moreover, Marx does not confine himself to a philosophical postulation of the problem. His philosophical analysis is organically combined with economic and social analysis.

Private property not only fails to promote the development of the human essence; it actually impoverishes and deforms it. This shows itself above all in the corruption of the nature of labour, its forced, alienated character. Forced capitalist labour "... produces beauty—but for the worker, deformity. It replaces labour by machines—but some of the workers it throws back to a barbarous type of labour, and the other workers it turns into machines. It produces intelligence—but for the worker idiocy, cretinism."<sup>1</sup>

Such work leads to the degradation of the human personality, its utter debasement. Capitalist labour runs counter to the essence of the worker as a human being. Instead of asserting man, it denies him, prevents the worker from giving full scope to his physical and spiritual energy, exhausts his physical nature and cripples his mentality.

Production based on private property produces man as a being that is both spiritually and physically dehumanised. Private property leads to the destruction of man's wholeness as a personality, to one-sidedness and dispersion instead of harmonious development.

To bring out this idea Marx writes that the individual's spiritual wealth is determined by his conditions of life, that only music can awaken man's musical instinct. The richness of man's spiritual world is determined by the objectively developed richness of his human essence or, as Marx was to say later, "the richness of human relations". But this is precisely what capitalism has deprived the working people of for centuries.

Examining the problem of man on the plane of his development as a consumer of the material and spiritual goods that he produces, Marx comes to the conclusion that capitalism not only fails to promote the development of the

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, p. 68.

worker's human needs and thus the enrichment of his human essence, but on the contrary engenders brutalisation and crude simplification of needs. So capitalism from this point of view as well deforms man and dehumanises him.

Developing the problem raised in his article "On the Jewish Question" concerning the relation of the essence of man and the criterion of his value in bourgeois society, Marx in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* goes deeper into the role played by capital in distorting man's essential being and human relations. In bourgeois society with its predominance of private property, money forms the criterion of human worth. "Money's properties are my properties and essential powers—the properties and powers of its possessor. Thus what I *am* and *am capable of* is by no means determined by my individuality. I am ugly, but I can buy for myself the most *beautiful* of women. Therefore I am not *ugly*, for the effect of *ugliness*—its deterrent power—is nullified by money. I, in my character as an individual, am *lame*, but money furnishes me with twenty-four feet. Therefore I am not lame. I am bad, dishonest, unscrupulous, stupid; but money is honoured, and therefore so is its possessor. Money is the supreme good, therefore its possessor is good. Money, besides, saves me the trouble of being dishonest: I am therefore presumed honest. I am *stupid*, but money is the *real mind* of all things and how then should its possessor be stupid?"<sup>1</sup>

Money distorts the nature of human feelings, turns loyalty into betrayal, love into hate, hate into love, virtue into vice, vice into virtue, makes the slave a master and the master a slave, stupidity wisdom, and wisdom stupidity, and so on.

The divine power of money, Marx says, lies in its essence as the alienated, alienating and self-alienating species essence of man. Thanks to this power "... money is thus the general overturning of *individualities* which turns them into their contraries and adds contradictory attributes to their real attributes."<sup>2</sup> Though it is a product of people's activity, money begins to dominate them, enslaves them, corrupts their human essence, their mutual relations.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

Thus Marx analyses the problem of man's essence and existence in its economic, social and moral aspects or, in other words, on the plane of *the totality of alienated social relations engendered by private property*.

Marx's historic merit lies in his not confining himself to stating the fact of alienation of the individual under capitalism, of the conflict between man's essence and his existence, but also pointed out the way to *eliminate alienation*, in his description, if only in outline, of the conditions that would ensure the development of the human personality, the richness and versatility of the manifestation of the worker's essential being. Alienation can be abolished, Marx wrote "...solely by putting communism into operation. In order to abolish the *idea* of private property, the *idea* of communism is completely sufficient. It takes *actual* communist action to abolish actual private property."<sup>1</sup>

Describing the characteristic features of communism, Marx writes that communism "...is the *genuine* resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man—the true resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species".<sup>2</sup> These splendidly profound thoughts are totally ignored by bourgeois ideologists in their manipulations with the concept of "alienation". And yet without these statements there can be no true understanding of Marx's conception of alienation.

From what has been said it will be quite clear that Marx links the concept of alienation with the social antagonisms engendered by private property, and envisages the end of alienation only as the result of the abolition of private property and the totality of alienated social relations and social processes which it generates. In abolishing private property communism will put an end to the alienation of man and bring about the genuine acquisition of *human* essence by man and for man, the emancipation of human feelings.

Bourgeois society based on private property distorts human instincts, subordinates all physical and spiritual instincts to

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

the one urge for acquisition and thus deprives man of his inner wealth, impoverishes him. "The transcendence of private property is therefore the complete *emancipation* of all human senses and attributes; but it is this emancipation precisely because these senses and attributes have become, subjectively and objectively, *human*."<sup>1</sup>

We shall return to this proposition later to analyse it in the light of the development of socialist society in the USSR, but at the moment I would draw attention to the way Marx associates the emancipation of the human senses with their objective basis, which he understands as the new complex of social relations engendered by communism.

Communism, says Marx, will lead to the *wealth of man*. But this will not be merely wealth in the narrow economic sense. What he means is richness in human essence, a life of wide and varied activity and, accordingly, a richness in human needs. "The *rich* human being is simultaneously the human being *in need* of a totality of human life-activities—the man in whom his own realisation exists as an inner necessity, as need."<sup>2</sup>

Marx associates this richness of man's spiritual world with social relations. "Not only *wealth*, but likewise the poverty of man—given socialism—receives in equal measure a *human* and, therefore, social significance. Poverty is the passive bond which causes the human being to experience the need of the greatest wealth—the *other* human being."<sup>3</sup>

So we are talking about the richness of a man's inner, spiritual world, about the versatility and fullness of its manifestation, about people's mutual enrichment through their dealings with one another, on the basis of new social relations.

Criticising crude, egalitarian communism that "everywhere denies man's personality", Marx regards communism as "man's reintegration or return to himself". "*Communism* as the *positive* transcendence of *private property*, or *human self-estrangement*, and therefore as the real *appropriation* of the *human* essence by and for man; communism therefore as the complete return of man to himself as a *social* (i.e., human) being—a return become conscious, and accom-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



plished within the entire wealth of previous development. This communism, as fully-developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as fully-developed humanism equals naturalism. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Despite the fragmentary nature of the *Manuscripts*, Marx, as has already been said, developed in them his teaching on man, which differs profoundly from all previous concepts of humanism, particularly Feuerbach's.

Although Marx had at that time not yet arrived at a consistent materialist understanding of history, he had already transferred the problem of humanism from the idealist and abstract-ethical heights to the real ground of social relations. Marx spoke concretely of the alienation of the worker, of his dehumanisation by the totality of social relations based on private property, and accordingly *linked the elimination of alienation with the abolition of private property, with the victory of communism*. Communism, says Marx, will lead to reintegration of the personality, to man's return to himself, to his assumption of his own human essence or, in other words, to the elimination of all forms of human alienation, to elimination of the contradictions between essence and existence, to the all-round development of man as a person and individual. It is in this sense that Marx speaks of communism as the "realisation of practical humanism". This expression has great significance and puts the problem on an entirely new basis.

Marx regards communism as "the real embodiment of humanism". "... Communism, as the annulment of private property, is the justification of real human life as man's possession and thus the advent of practical humanism."<sup>2</sup>

Speaking of the unity of society and the individual under communism, Marx gives a special warning on the need to avoid "the re-establishing of 'Society' as an abstraction *vis-à-vis* the individual".<sup>3</sup> The revisionists of today, lending a false meaning to this proposition, use it in their struggle

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, p. 95. The concept of "naturalism" that Marx was using already in *The German Ideology* is singled out by the opponents of Marxism in order to declare him a "naturalist humanist". The theoretical weakness of these arguments is dealt with in my further analysis of the problem—M.P.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

against the Soviet and other socialist societies, the true nature of which they ignore and distort. But this will be considered in greater detail in the chapter on communism. The point I wish to stress at the moment is Marx's idea of the *unity of the individual and society on the basis of the elimination of the class antagonisms* generated by private property. This is an aspect of the problem that the enemies of Marxism do all they can to muffle, and yet it is the main thing that Marx seeks to emphasise in his characterisation of the communism that would replace the private-property society. It is of this communist society, released from antagonisms, that Marx writes: "Activity and consumption, both in their content and in their *mode of existence*, are *social*: *social activity and social consumption*."<sup>1</sup>

Whereas in a society based on private property people treat one another as a means of benefiting themselves, in socialist society man becomes a need for his fellow man. For the socialist man, Marx points out, all of what is known as universal history is nothing else but the procreation of man by human labour, the becoming of nature for man.

The development of man as an integral being, his manifold connections with the external world and the all-round development of the personality itself Marx links with the abolition of private property. "Man," he writes, "appropriates his total essence in a total manner, that is to say, as a whole man."<sup>2</sup>

Communism creates the conditions for development of all the richness of man's essential being, "... produces man in this entire richness of his being—produces the *rich man profoundly endowed with all the senses*—as its enduring reality."<sup>3</sup>

A distinctive feature of the Marxist conception of humanism, even as early as the period of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, is its *effectiveness*. Of vital importance is Marx's remark that resolution of theoretical opposites—and Marx includes among these the contradiction between man's human essence and his existence—is possible only through practice and that for this reason their resolution is by no means a task merely of cognition, but presents an

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

actual, living problem which previous philosophy was unable to resolve just because it regarded it as a purely theoretical problem. In his later works Marx frequently returns to the question of the *role of revolutionary theory in the class struggle of the proletariat*. In his *Theses on Feuerbach* he advances the classical postulate that philosophers until now have only *interpreted* the world, but the point, however, is to *change* it.

Another characteristic fact is that even before the writing of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* Marx saw the power that was destined by history to bring humanity to liberation from all forms of alienation. As we already know, in his "From the Criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction" he wrote that such a force would be only the proletariat. In the *Manuscripts* he brilliantly develops the proposition that the *emancipation of the working class is the basis of emancipation for all mankind*.

In this work Marx for the first time expressed the idea of the leading role of social relations in the life of society. The whole spirit of the *Manuscripts* implies that Marx believed the determining factor in these relations to be the relationship to the means of production, in this particular case—the private ownership of them. All enslaving relations are only modifications and consequences of the above-mentioned relations, i.e., the relation of the worker to production.

Proceeding from this, Marx repeatedly brings up the *question of the need to eliminate private property and the economic alienation connected with it as the basis of all human alienation*. He gives special warning that unlike religious alienation, which takes place only in the sphere of the consciousness, in man's inner world, economic alienation is the alienation of real life and therefore its elimination takes place in all aspects, both economic and spiritual. At the same time Marx emphasises that the *elimination of economic alienation leads to the political emancipation of the worker*: "...the emancipation of society from private property, etc., from servitude, is expressed in the political form of the emancipation of the workers..."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, p. 77.

In the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* Marx did not give the profound scientific substantiation of the objective laws of social development that was to come later, nor had he yet formulated the proposition that the victory of communism was conditioned by the objective laws of the development of capitalism, but even then he expressed the idea of the *historical inevitability of communism*. Communism, Marx writes, is the necessary form and principle of the very near future. Maintaining that for the abolition of private property in reality there must be "real communist action", Marx continues: "History will come to it; and this movement, which in *theory* we already know to be a self-transcending movement, will constitute in *actual fact* a very severe and protracted process."<sup>1</sup>

This prophetic statement was profoundly and scientifically substantiated with the discovery of the materialist understanding of history, as was the Marxist doctrine of man, the Marxist theory of humanism.

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To recapitulate, it must once again be emphasised that the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* had tremendous significance in the formation of the Marxist theory of humanism. Analysing the whole gamut of problems connected with man, his role in society, his destiny and harmonious development in the light of the problem of alienation, Marx enunciates in these *Manuscripts* a series of profound ideas and propositions that played a significant part in the subsequent elaboration of the problems of scientific communism, political economy, aesthetics and ethics that retain their theoretical importance and relevance to this day.

In a deep-going and interesting investigation of the Marxist theory of the individual, the French Marxist Lucien Sève writes that the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, taken as a whole, did after all "remain at the level of *speculative humanism*"; they "were a passionate challenge to create a science of man on the level of *Capital*"<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> L. Sève, *Marxisme et théorie de la personnalité*, Paris, 1969, p. 191. (Emphasis added—M.P.)



Sève bases his case on the assumption that "in the *Manuscripts of 1844* the concept of man referred to the idea of the abstract human essence as the subject of history, and that social relations as well as economic categories were merely its external manifestations. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

In our analysis we have tried to show that Feuerbach's influence in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* is mainly terminological in character. Despite the fact that in this work Marx had not yet given a general philosophical definition of the essence of man as the totality of all social relations, he was virtually examining the problem of man, and particularly the problem of alienation, on the plane of capitalist social relations.

In a different connection Sève relaxes his formulation and writes that the speculative stand "made itself felt in the works of 1844 and particularly in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*".<sup>2</sup> This second statement seems to me nearer the truth. Even so, one must also take into account the continuity and unity between the early and later stages in the development of Marxism, particularly in Marx's conception of man. Yet even when we are aware of this continuity it is quite clear that it was Marx's discovery of the materialist understanding of history that gave humanism a sound scientific foundation, that only with the discovery of the theory of surplus value did humanism gain a basis in reality. Marx's conception of man, the theory of humanism, became entirely scientific, acquired a consistently revolutionary character only with the discovery of the materialist understanding of history, with the evolution of scientific communism, and this is why the ideologists of the contemporary bourgeoisie and their various supporters attack it so fiercely.

But some Marxologists, open or concealed opponents of Marxism, set out to "prove" that humanism was developed by Marx only in his early works, only in his *Manuscripts of 1844*, in fact, and that when he discovered the materialist interpretation of history he renounced humanism. Bourgeois ideologists, Right-wing reformists and revisionists declare

<sup>1</sup> L. Sève, *Marxisme et théorie de la personnalité*, Paris, 1969, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

that the concern for man that characterises Marx's early works is replaced in his later writings by a treatment of the problem that is indifferent to humanism, that a "terrible swing-over" took place from his early humanism to "radical anti-humanism". The anti-Marxists of various trends argue that materialism and humanism are incompatible, that Marx developed humanism, and could develop it, only from idealist positions, and so on. And it is to serve this argument that they assiduously twist the meaning of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* and other works of Marx, distorting his ideas in all kinds of ways.

In an attempt to align Marx and Hegel, one of the theorists of Catholicism P. Bigo declares that in Marx the "phenomenology of the spirit was simply reduced to a phenomenology of labour, the dialectic of the alienation of man to a dialectic of the alienation of capital, and the metaphysic of absolute Knowledge to a metaphysic of absolute (some expression!—M.P.) communism".<sup>1</sup> The same false idea is preached by another theorist of Catholicism—Émile Baas. In his book *A Critical Introduction to Marxism* (1960), Baas, citing Hegel's terminology in Marx's early works, and particularly the theory of alienation, tries to present Marx merely as an heir to the ideas of Hegel.

Other critics of Marxism, as has already been said, identify Marx's understanding of alienation with that of Feuerbach by placing it on an anthropological basis, for instance. Thus, Herbert Marcuse sees the value of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* only in the fact that they were written from positions of man in general. He maintains that the point of departure of the *Manuscripts* is not the representative of the working class, the working people, but the abstract human being postulated by Feuerbach. De Man, in the thirties, and the contemporary critics of Marxism,<sup>2</sup> including the theorists of so-called ethical socialism, argue on similar lines.

Such statements are a deliberate refusal to consider the true ideas of the *Manuscripts*, the links with preceding works, in which Marx showed himself to be an ideologist of

<sup>1</sup> P. Bigo, *Marxisme et humanisme*, Paris, 1953, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed critique of their views see the works of T. I. Oizerman, L. N. Pazhitnov, E. M. Sitnikov referred to in the present book.

the proletariat, and also their links with the later works of mature Marxism.

By substituting the abstract human being for the concept of "worker" the opponents of Marxism simultaneously negate the concrete socio-political meaning that Marx instilled in the concept of the "alienated human being", and declare alienation to be an eternal attribute of mankind in general. They follow this up by proclaiming alienation to be the theoretical basis of humanism, the central concept of its philosophy. And since Marx, according to them, is supposed to have renounced the concept of alienation after arriving at the materialist understanding of history, he is then said to have—broken with humanism!

In reality, as has been shown in the above analysis, Marx never regarded alienation as an eternal attribute of an abstract human being existing outside history, conditioned by man's biological peculiarities as a living being. Nor does he renounce the category of alienation in his later works, written from positions of the materialist understanding of history. This concept is used by Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology*, in *Capital*, in *Theories of Surplus-Value* and other works of the 1850s and 60s.

## 2. Problem of Humanism in Capital and Other Works of Developed Marxism<sup>1</sup>

In *The German Ideology* the founders of Marxism give a general definition of the concept of "alienation". Alienation, they write, is "... fixation of social activity, ... consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations"<sup>2</sup>. Noting that alienation is one of the chief elements in all previous historical development, Marx and Engels stress that as a social force it acts in relation to individuals as an alien power that stands beyond them and of whose origins and tendencies they have no knowledge. In *The German Ideology* Marx

<sup>1</sup> In this section I analyse only some of the basic questions connected with the development of Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism. The other problems of man are dealt with as a whole in subsequent chapters.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1968, p. 45.

and Engels freed themselves of many of Feuerbach's concepts to which they had resorted in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*.

Investigating the problem of alienation in the works of Marx, the Soviet professor, I. S. Narsky, writes: "In *The German Ideology* we see the embryo of the discovery, which Marx was to formulate quite definitely in *Capital*, that the secret of alienation lay in the duality of labour itself, namely, in the possibility of the alienation of abstract labour from concrete labour, which in the conditions of private property leads to a succession of disastrous consequences."<sup>1</sup> Marx also examines the problem of man in the economic works of the fifties and sixties already indicated. In a rough draft of the 1857-1858 manuscript of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* Marx regards alienation as a socio-economic category of capitalism, as the relation of labour to its objective conditions and hence to the objectivity created by labour itself, as to another person's property. The works of 1857-1859 also have value for us because they criticise the conception of the abstract human being, convincingly reveal the weakness of bourgeois anthropologism and the illusory nature of the humanism based upon it.

The key work, however, in the development of the Marxist conception of humanism is Marx's *Capital*.

The problem of man, so brilliantly postulated in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, acquired in *Capital* a profound scientific substantiation and development based on the materialist understanding of history, on investigation of the objective laws of development of capitalism, of the whole system of bourgeois society, its politics, ideology, moral relations and so on.

Of course, Marx did not give and could not have given in *Capital* a special, integrated and logically complete exposition of the problem of man. But this cannot be regarded as a basis for denying the scientific postulation and elaboration of the problem in this monumental work of Marxism. On the contrary, the fundamental aim of Marx's investigation of capitalist society was, as is well known, profound and comprehensive scientific substantiation of the

<sup>1</sup> I. S. Narsky, *The Category of Alienation in "Capital" and Other Works of Marx* (in Russian). See Marx's *Capital*.



need to overcome the antagonistic character of progress in this society: the contradictions between the development of the productive forces of society and the interests of the working people, their freedom, proof of the historical necessity of communism as "real humanism".

"Marx sharply stresses the bad sides of capitalist production," wrote Engels, "but with equal emphasis clearly proves that this social form was necessary to develop the productive forces of society to a level which will make possible an equal development worthy of human beings for all members of society."<sup>1</sup>

The whole of *Capital* is intimately bound up with the problem of man.

As we have noted, here, too, Marx uses the concept of "alienation", particularly in analysing the socio-economic aspect of the problem. It is used both to characterise labour, its conditions in capitalist society and the conditions of its reproduction, and also in the wider socio-economic plane, to analyse value, to expose the antagonism of capitalist production, and to consider the tendencies of the process of accumulation in their other aspects. But in *Capital* the concept of alienation emerges in a more highly crystallised form, a form more closely interpreted from the standpoint of historical materialism. Marx proved that wage labour is labour that is alienated from itself, "which stands confronted by the wealth it has created as alien wealth, by its own productive power as the productive power of its product, by its enrichment as its own impoverishment and by its social power as the power of society."<sup>2</sup>

Naturally Marx does not confine himself to the category of alienation but makes wide use of the wealth of economic, political and philosophical concepts he has already evolved for analysing the various aspects of the problem of man. He skilfully exposes, for example, the anti-humanist nature of the social division of labour under capitalist conditions, the way man is disintegrated and turned into a partial function of the social division and of labour, the way the

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Moscow, 1969, Vol. 2, p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Moscow, 1971, Part III, p. 268.

worker is turned into a kind of living, conscious appendage of the machine, and so on.

Marx shows the close connection between the capitalist alienation of labour and capitalist exploitation and its other concomitants. But in *Capital*, as distinct from the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, the problem of man is dealt with on the basis of such class concepts as the political economy of capitalism, as *surplus value*, *abstract and concrete labour*, *their dialectics*, *surplus labour time and free time*, *the dialectics of forms of value*, *commodity fetishism*, etc. In the course of his criticism of the fetishist mystification of the whole system of social relations of capitalism, illusory forms of consciousness and so on, Marx scientifically proves that man's alienation in capitalist society has its roots in surplus value.

Analysis of capitalist society brings Marx to the conclusion that capitalism destroys man's intrinsic worth, that it threatens "... by suppressing his detail-function, to make him superfluous".<sup>1</sup>

Every line of *Capital* implies a deeply-felt concern over the wholesale crippling of the mass of the people, over the "Timur-Tamerlanish prodigality of human life",<sup>2</sup> concern for those who become superfluous in a society created by their labour. No wonder the ideologists of present-day imperialism so zealously deny the significance of the problem of man in *Capital*.

In this fundamental work the economic aspect of the problem of man is treated in organic unity with its philosophico-ethical and socio-political aspects. As we have seen earlier, there was a similar unity in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, where economic analysis of the problem of alienation was also supplemented by a consideration of the philosophical problem of man's essence and the conditions of his existence. This part of the *Manuscripts* forms a kind of philosophical hymn to man, to his role and purpose in life, and undoubtedly lends them their humanist significance. But in the *Manuscripts* the problem of the conflict between man's essence and his existence is posed only in general terms. In *Capital* this

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Capital*, Moscow, 1965, Vol. 1, p. 487.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

problem is based on a profound and searching analysis of capitalist society, the laws of its development, its political superstructure, bourgeois law, morality, religion and so on.

Of immense significance to the Marxist conception of man developed in *Capital* are the propositions on *man's social nature, on his political activity and on social practice*.

As Lucien Sève rightly says, "behind the economic categories of the distinction between concrete and abstract labour, the value of labour power and the size of wages, the division of labour, the influence of money, the production of absolute and relative surplus value, the general law of capitalist accumulation there stand active human individuals."<sup>1</sup>

Marx's treatment of *the question of freedom* is linked with the philosophico-ethical aspect of the problem. In *Capital* it goes beyond the traditional framework of abstract ethics and formal law. Marx poses the problem on the basis of socio-historical relations. He examines it in both the broad socio-historical plane connected with dialectical historical progress in the development of society and in the concrete plane of the totality of economic, socio-political, legal, moral, religious and other ideological relations of bourgeois society. All these aspects are shown to be connected with human activity and are illuminated by the beacon light of Marx's humanism.

Marx's understanding of freedom implies activity aimed at creating real conditions for the free, all-round development and flowering of man's individuality. Hence its profound humanist essence. It is not a matter of formal legal freedom or of the abstract ethical freedom of the will, but of the *free integral development* of man as the aim of communism.

In the third volume of *Capital*, Marx linked the question of the development of the productive forces of society with expansion and satisfaction of man's needs, with the problem of freedom and necessity, and advanced the idea of *the development of human energy* as the "end in itself" of the future communist society, pointing out that the basic requisite of such development was shortening of the working day.<sup>2</sup> Marx developed the Ricardian socialists' conjecture

<sup>1</sup> L. Sève, *Marxisme et théorie de la personnalité*, pp. 184-185.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, *Capital*, Moscow, 1966, Vol. III, p. 820.

that free time should become the true wealth of socialist society.

"When... *free time*," he wrote, "ceases to exist in its *antagonistic form*, then on the one hand the needs of the social individual will become the measure of the time that must be spent on work, while on the other hand the development of the productive forces will take place at such speed that, although production will be calculated to provide wealth for all, the *free time* of all will increase. For true wealth is the developed productive power of all individuals. Free time not work time will then be the measure of wealth... free time—comprising both leisure and time for more elevated activity—must, of course, make a different person of him who possesses it..."<sup>1</sup>

Both in their individual works and when writing in collaboration, the founders of Marxism subjected to profound and penetrating criticism from positions of the materialist understanding of history the anthropological conception of man and anthropological humanism as a whole; they gave the first scientific definition of the essence of man, enunciated valuable ideas revealing the essence of and interconnection between the concepts of man, individual and individuality. In a series of economic and historical studies they substantiated the role of the individual as the subject of the historical process, as an active creative force, and on this plane threw light on the problem of the interaction of the individual and society, gave grounds for assuming that the development of the mass of the people, and hence the working individual, proceeds according to certain laws, and formulated programmatic propositions on the role of the class struggle of the proletariat and all the working people in realising mankind's humanist ideals, in emancipating the workers and in developing their civil and moral awareness.

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We have examined only the basic problems connected with the Marxist-Leninist conception of man, with communist humanism. But even this brief analysis shows how unfounded are attempts to confine Marx's humanism to the *Economic*

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Works*, 2nd Russ. ed., Vol. 46, Part II, pp. 217, 221.



and *Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* and deny the humanism of the "mature" Marx, to break up the whole and integrated Marxist-Leninist doctrine on humanism, to distort the humanist legacy left by Marx, Engels and Lenin and set one against the other.

As regards the theoretical side of the question, these attempts may sometimes be attributed to a failure to understand the essence of the Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism, to ignorance of how it differs in principle from narrow psychological and other idealist conceptions. But theory scarcely comes into this, for it is quite obvious that the problem of man, the problem of humanism is treated as an integral whole in the works of the founders of Marxism-Leninism. This wholeness is indisputable despite the fact that some of the problems involved were postulated and worked out at different times and with different aims in view, in the course of the investigation of various urgent problems of theory and practice. Many aspects of the problem, particularly the sociological, socio-political and, to some extent, the ethical aspects, were examined and analysed by the founders of Marxism-Leninism in organic connection with their analysis of bourgeois society and its ideology, in connection with the practice of the class struggle of the proletariat and the whole mass of the working people, in connection with the tasks of the socialist revolution, the formulation of the aims and principles of the communist social system, the theory of scientific communism.

Accordingly I feel it is necessary to consider in greater detail the truly significant role played by the scientific humanist legacy of Engels and Lenin in establishing and developing an integrated Marxist theory of humanism. The need to do so becomes even more apparent if one takes into account the fact that in the anti-Marxist and anti-communist literature of recent years their actual role and significance have been particularly actively attacked, distorted and put in opposition to the teaching of Marx.

Bourgeois Marxologists and revisionists endeavour, for example, to counterpose their own invented "scientist" trend in the development of Marxism, which they connect with the name of Engels, to the "naturalistic" humanism of Marx.

The well-known anti-communist Iring Fetscher tries to

"prove" that, unlike Marx, an advocate of abstract, non-class humanism, Engels, particularly in *Anti-Dühring*, converts philosophy into a "proletarian world outlook", ignoring the problem of humanism and claiming that his theories are scientific. Creating a false antithesis between Marx and Engels, he writes that for Marx everything was concentrated in man, while the actually existing external world was allegedly of no importance. Fetscher then tries very hard to counterpose Marx and Lenin. Lenin, he declares, continued the work of Engels and gave an even more dogmatic form to dialectical materialism and the proletarian world outlook as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

Fetscher has his supporters, who also try to place Marx's humanism in opposition to the "scientism" of Engels. Using almost the same expressions, E. Fischer writes, for example, that Engels created a "new" version of Marxism which is supposed to ignore the problem of man, of humanism, and is based solely on cognition of the laws of the external world. Counterposing the problem of man to science, E. Fischer regards Marxism merely as a "philosophy of man", based on the category of alienation. For Marx, he maintains, the problem of alienation was central.<sup>2</sup>

Unfounded though they are, the claims that Engels and, later, Lenin rejected the problem of man, rejected humanism, have their methodological "basis". They proceed from the "traditional" split between the problem of man and science, from the interpretation of the problem of man on the abstract-ethical, psychological, abstract-humanist plane. It is no accident therefore that remarks about the so-called "scientist trends" in Marxism usually involve an initial distortion of Marx's conception of humanism, its interpretation as "naturalist" humanism.

But the point is that Marx and Engels completely overcame the theoretical and historical limitations of the religious-idealist and anthropological conceptions of man held by their predecessors and contemporaries. Criticising the quasi-humanist theories of the Young Hegelians, Feuerbach, and Proudhon, and various petty-bourgeois individualistic,

<sup>1</sup> I. Fetscher, *Karl Marx und Materialismus. Von der Philosophie des Proletariats zur proletarischen Weltanschauung*. München, 1967, S. 140.

<sup>2</sup> E. Fischer, *Was Marx wirklich sagte*, Wien, Molden, 1968.

anarchistic conceptions, Marx and Engels did not renounce the problem of man, of humanism, but on the contrary built up their own conception of a scientific, revolutionary humanism of action. On the basis of a materialist understanding of history they produced a consistently scientific interpretation of the whole gamut of philosophical, ethical, social, economic and other questions involved in the problem of man. It was on this basis that for the first time in the history of humanist teaching they *blended humanism and science*.

It is known that Engels quite independently, even before he began to collaborate with Marx, had turned away from idealism towards materialism, from revolutionary democracy to communism. In the course of this transition, even before he met Marx, he had perceived the role of economic relations as the foundation of ruthless exploitation and spiritual stultification of the masses and the individual. "While I was in Manchester, it was tangibly brought home to me that the economic facts, which have so far played no role or only a contemptible one in the writing of history, are, at least in the modern world, a decisive historical force; that they form the basis of the origination of the present-day class antagonisms; that these class antagonisms, in the countries where they have become fully developed, thanks to large-scale industry, hence especially in England, are in their turn the basis of the formation of political parties and of party struggles, and thus of all political history."<sup>1</sup>

Engels arrived at the problem of humanism on the basis of a comprehensive study of the economic and social condition of the British proletariat, the social movement on the continent, and also under the impact of socialist ideas in France, Germany and Switzerland.

Such works of Engels as the *Letters from Wuppertal*, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, *Letters from London*, and particularly the *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, the articles "Successes of the Movement for Social Reform on the Continent", "The Position of England" and others, are highly relevant to any study of Engels' ideas on humanism.

Independently, before meeting Marx, Engels linked the

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Moscow, 1970, Vol. 3, p. 178.

emancipation of mankind with the class struggle of the proletariat, as a progressive social force, revealed the humanist character of the aim of its struggle and the unity between the interests of the proletariat and the interests of all the working people.

When discussing Engels' ideas, which are of immense importance in the development of the Marxist philosophical conception of man, one must pay particular attention to his understanding of the problem of man's intrinsic nature, the dialectic of essence and existence, the essence of alienation, the role of the practical activity of the subject, the philosophical conception of freedom, his criticism of abstract anthropologism and the abstract humanism connected with it.

Engels made a broad study of the problem of man both in its socio-economic, political and also its philosophico-ethical aspects. He examined it on the plane of the existing social relations of capitalism and the social consequences of the laws of its development. Characterising the *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, Lenin wrote that in them Engels "...examined the principal phenomena of the contemporary economic order from a socialist standpoint, regarding them as necessary consequences of the rule of private property."<sup>1</sup>

In this respect Engels also specifically analysed the social consequences of the social division of labour in societies composed of antagonistic classes, particularly capitalist society. He investigated the problem of labour, its significance and character. He enunciated valuable ideas on the alienation of man's intrinsic nature in the sphere of capitalist production, in enforced labour. Later, in the course of his creative collaboration with Marx, Engels gave a profound analysis of this problem in his study of the origin of the family, private property and the state. Using a wealth of factual material, he succeeded in revealing the ruthless exploitation of labour, particularly that of women and children, under capitalism, in showing how capitalism turned man into a commodity, how in the conditions of private property and competition labour is converted from being a creative factor into a force that destroys those who perform it.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 24.



His further economic and historical studies led him to generalisations of a deeper theoretical nature. In this he was undoubtedly helped by his collaboration with Marx, which prompted a more profound theoretical postulation and more comprehensive scientific analysis of a whole series of questions raised by the problem of humanism. These are to be found in such works written in collaboration with Marx as *The Holy Family*, *The German Ideology*, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, and also in Engels' independent works *The Housing Question*, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, *Anti-Dühring*, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, and many letters and articles.

In complete unanimity with Marx, Engels believed that progress in antagonistic class society, particularly in bourgeois society, was bound to take contradictory form. "Since the exploitation of one class by another is the basis of civilisation, its whole development moves in a continuous contradiction. Every advance in production is at the same time a retrogression in the condition of the oppressed class, that is, of the great majority. What is a boon for the one is necessarily a bane for the other; each new emancipation of one class always means a new oppression of another class. The most striking proof of this is furnished by the introduction of machinery, the effects of which are well known today."<sup>1</sup>

The contradictory nature of progress in society based on private property is vividly confirmed in the conditions of modern scientific and technological progress in the capitalist world.

Their materialist understanding of history helped Marx and Engels to prove the reactionary role of the bourgeoisie, the idea that the existence of a ruling exploiting class becomes every day a greater obstacle on the path towards the development and use of the productive forces, science and art in the interests of the whole of society.

In full agreement with Marx, Engels wrote of the alienation of man's intrinsic nature, of his enslavement in capitalist society by the products of his own activity, which become

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Moscow, 1970, Vol. 3, p. 333.

social forces that are estranged from him. In this respect Engels' analysis of the state as a machine in the hands of the exploiting class for the suppression of the oppressed, exploited class, his exposure of hypocritical bourgeois democracy, are of theoretical value.

Despite the assertions of the ideological opponents of Marxism, Engels, like Marx, never regarded alienation as a permanent biological feature of man. Over this question he was true to the principles of dialectical materialism and regarded alienation as a product of the historical development of society. Like Marx, Engels proceeded from the fact that the objective basis for disposing of human alienation is the abolition of private property and the establishment of social ownership of the means of production, the elimination of exploitation of man by man.

Ruthlessly criticising the Malthus theory, Engels wrote: "Through this theory we have come to know the deepest degradation of man, his dependence on the realm of competition. It has shown us how in the last instance *private property has turned man into a commodity* whose production and destruction also depend solely on demand; how the system of competition has thus slaughtered, and daily continues to slaughter, millions of men. All this we have seen, and all this drives us to the abolition of this degradation of mankind through the abolition of private property, competition and the opposing interests."<sup>1</sup>

Clearly these striking humanist thoughts could have been written only by a scientific revolutionary for whom the interests of mankind, the emancipation of man were not merely a subject of theoretical research but an aim in life.

In diametrical opposition to Malthus, Engels wrote that man's power to produce was unlimited. With profound faith in the effectiveness of human action he maintained that capital increased every day, that manpower increased with the growth of population and science daily brought the forces of nature more and more under man's control. "This immeasurable productive capacity, handled with consciousness and in the interest of all, would soon reduce to a

<sup>1</sup> In an Appendix to K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1967, p. 186. (Emphasis added—M.P.)

minimum the labour falling to the share of mankind. Left to competition, it does the same, but within a context of antitheses."<sup>1</sup>

In ascribing "metaphysical ontologism" to Engels, the critics of Marxist-Leninist humanism are trying to present him as a philosopher who denies man's active nature and reduces his essence to the mechanical sum total of objectively existing social relations.

Engels did indeed take full account of the significance of social relations in man's formation and development. He was exceptionally profound and versatile in uncovering the negative effect of the whole system of private-property, capitalist social relations in the problem of man, in the condition and development of the working people. He vividly and convincingly described the role and significance of communist social relations in the evolution of a free and fully developed individual. But, like Marx, and later Lenin, Engels considered social relations in their dialectical unity and interaction with man's social activity, as the result of this activity, its social expression, and proceeded from the unity of the objective and subjective. Engels was concerned with the living and manifold process of human activity, the social interrelationships in which man is formed.

As we know, the founders of Marxism by the very logic of their struggle against idealism and Feuerbach's anthropologism continually stressed the significance of social relations, the objective laws of historical development. But none of them ever took up a position of "metaphysical ontologism" or "economic determinism".

Criticising the anti-scientific conceptions of the Young Hegelians, Engels wrote in collaboration with Marx in the *Holy Family*: "History does *nothing*, it 'possesses no immense wealth', it 'wages no battles'. It is *man*, real living man, that does all that, that possesses and fights; 'history' is not a person apart, using man as a means for *its own* particular aims; history is *nothing but* the activity of man pursuing his aims."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1967, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family or Critique of Critical Critique*, Moscow, 1956, p. 125.

In the light of what has been said so far it is not hard to see the futility of the attempts of certain Western philosophers to ascribe to Marxism a passive, contemplative attitude towards reality, to identify the Marxist understanding of the correlation between subject and object with the interpretation offered by Feuerbach and other metaphysical materialists. In his book *Marxism of the Twentieth Century* Roger Garaudy clearly urges us to go back to Fichte for the principle of activity. He claims that Fichte sets Marxists an example of how to link "the two ends of the chain—morality and society". Yet it is quite incomprehensible how Fichte could have solved this problem from the standpoint of idealism and voluntarism! In passing it may be noted that Garaudy needed this "enrichment" of Marxism with Fichteanism in order to "synthesise" Marxism with the modern idealist conceptions that absolutise the individual and his freedom. Garaudy asks himself whether it is not possible "inspired by the efforts of Fichte, to join the two ends of the chain, to engage and absorb the demand of Sartre, making it an element of our own thought"<sup>1</sup>. In reply to this it can be stated quite definitely that Marxist philosophy from the very beginning took the form of a philosophy of the revolutionary transformation of reality by man and for man, and clearly has no need of Fichte or of Sartre to "enrich itself" with the principle of scientifically cognised subjectivity, activity.

The principle of the activity of the subject, his creative role, is organically connected with and based on the Marxist interpretation of the role of labour. It was Marx and Engels who first scientifically substantiated the decisive role of labour, of practical activity in man's development. Unlike the bourgeois economists, who regarded labour merely as a source of wealth, Marx and Engels, while not denying this side of it, looked upon labour as the characteristic attribute of man and human society, as the practical activity in which man manifests his intrinsic nature.

To recapitulate, there is every justification for recognising the immense and exceptional part played by Engels, both as a young man and in his maturity, in seeking in collaboration with Marx a new, scientific conception of man, of

<sup>1</sup> R. Garaudy, *Marxisme du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 1966, p. 91.



communist humanism, in substantiating its fundamental positions.

All attempts to present Engels as a "scientist" who had no time for the problem of man and set it apart from the framework of scientific knowledge are far-fetched and cannot stand up to criticism. Alone at first, and later with his great friend and co-philosopher Marx, Engels worked tirelessly to put on a scientific basis the ways and means of achieving real well-being and happiness for man, his freedom, his complete self-realisation and all-round development.

### 3. Unity of the Philosophical, Social and Anthropological Aspects of the Problem of Lenin's Theoretical Legacy

From various philosophical and political positions and in various forms the ideological opponents of Marxism-Leninism are doing all they can to propagate the idea that Lenin ignored the problem of man, the problem of humanism. As we have already noted, this is the aim they pursue by their allegations that there have been two opposed trends in the development of Marxism: the "anthropological humanism" of the "early" Marx and the "positivist-scientist" trend said to have been launched by Engels and continued by Plekhanov and Lenin; and that Marx's "naturalist humanism" and Lenin's "epistemological determinism" or "epistemological realism" are incompatible.

In his article, *On the Interpretation of Marx's Thought*, G. Lichtheim, for instance, having defined Marxism as "anthropological naturalism", casually reduces Lenin's significance to a substantiation merely of "epistemological realism". Taking this artificially created "foundation" as the basis of his argument, he proclaims the "absence" of any connection between Marx's understanding of conscious mental activity as an aspect of practice and Lenin's "epistemological determinism". The theory of reflection enunciated in Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Lichtheim blandly declares, is "incompatible with the Marxist standpoint", and emerged "from the accidental problem of work-

ing out a new theoretical basis for the natural sciences"<sup>1</sup> which, he claims, was of no interest to Marx. Lichtheim similarly maintains that "this theory also differs from Engels' point of view because for Engels materialism does not mean the same thing as epistemological realism."<sup>2</sup>

It is not only the bourgeois students of Marx, unfortunately, who are developing the false idea of two contradictory stages in the development of Marxism-Leninism—Marx's "anthropological humanism" and the "scientism" and "metaphysical ontologism" of Engels and Lenin. This view is shared by some philosophers in the socialist countries, particularly Yugoslavia.

"In dialectical materialism there are difficulties that do not fit in with Marx's conception of humanism," writes G. Petrović. "...The theory of reflection contradicts Marx's understanding of man as the essence of practice."<sup>3</sup> This idea is repeated by M. Marković, who maintains that the conception of "reflection" is not characteristic of Marx's active philosophical conception.

The counterposing of Marx's "naturalism-humanism" to Lenin's alleged "ontologism" and "epistemology" is organically connected with the denial of the dialectical materialist interpretation of the question of the interconnection between the subject and the object as the methodological basis of the problem of man, with repudiation of dialectical and historical materialism as a whole. It is well known, for instance, that a number of Yugoslav and other philosophers refuse to consider this basic question of philosophy, believing that any attempt to do so involves the "positivist-scientist" trend in Marxism, the "schematic" and "dogmatic" division of all philosophers into idealists and materialists.

Actually, of course, it is not a matter of schematism and dogmatism, which have been thoroughly criticised in contemporary Marxist-Leninist philosophical literature, but of a fundamental repudiation of the basic question of philosophy, of the materialist understanding of history. The philosophers who adopt these positions maintain that there can be no question of an objective reality as something

<sup>1</sup> Georg Lichtheim, *On the Interpretation of Marx's Thought*. In: *Marx and the Western World*, Notre Dame-London, 1967, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Praxis*, Zagreb, 1965, No. 4-5, pp. 615-16.

existing outside and independent of human consciousness. Being can be revealed only through "free creative action" in which, it is claimed, the contradiction between the material and the ideal is eliminated. On this "basis" the determining factors are held to be the "human world", "man as the free and creative essence of practice", "human existence" understood as "free creative activity", while the central object of philosophy is "the essential nature of man" and the problems connected with his existence: the problems of "practice" of "alienation", the "meaning of life", "creative freedom" and so on.

Repudiation of the dialectical-materialist interpretation of the basic question of philosophy, recognition of an identity between being and thought, leads to the repudiation of the dialectic of subject-object relationship, to subjectivism in treating the whole problem of man and humanism. Such positions provide a wide basis for a link-up with various idealist trends in modern Western philosophy, particularly neo-Freudism, existentialism, Husserlianism and various forms of irrationalism. A "base" is thus created for an amalgam of "early" Marxism and the above trends long ago initiated by E. Fromme, Jean-Paul Sartre and other Western philosophers. Indisputably, any of them are at liberty to make any amalgam they choose. But this is not Marxism. And their vain attempts to ascribe "metaphysical ontologism" to Lenin will not stand up to any criticism.

It is known that Lenin did not absolutise the antithesis between existence and thought. "Of course," he wrote, "even the antithesis of matter and mind has absolute significance only within the bounds of a very limited field—in this case exclusively within the bounds of the fundamental epistemological problem of what is to be regarded as primary and what as secondary. Beyond these bounds the relative character of this antithesis is indubitable."<sup>1</sup>

This proposition of Lenin's shows how far he was from the metaphysical ontologism that his modern critics so assiduously ascribe to him, basing themselves on and absolutising a certain metaphysical interpretation of the problem given in philosophical and particularly popular-

science literature published in the USSR and other countries in past years.

Lenin's emphasis on the relative nature of the antithesis of matter and mind beyond the bounds of the fundamental epistemological problem has tremendous methodological significance for a correct understanding of the dialectic of subject and object as the theoretical basis of the problem of man, for analysis and interpretation of the role of social relations, the social environment, for forming a philosophical conception of man, and particularly in discussing his essential nature.

*Lenin's theory of reflection, of epistemology*, is organically connected with the dialectical-materialist understanding and solution of the ontological problem.

Comprehensive study of Lenin's philosophical legacy shows that he regarded cognition as "...the eternal, endless approximation of thought to the object. The *reflection* of nature in man's thought must be understood not 'lifelessly', not 'abstractly', *not devoid of movement, not without contradictions*, but in the eternal *process* of movement, the arising of contradictions and their solution".<sup>1</sup>

Ignoring this proposition of Lenin's, the opponents of dialectical materialism base their arguments on the oversimplified and sometimes really dogmatic interpretations of the theory of reflection published some time ago. While passing over in complete silence some recently published very good works by Soviet and other Marxist writers, they brand the Leninist theory of reflection as the theoretical basis of conformism and positivism, juxtaposing cognition of the objective laws of the development of society to "free", "creative" activity of the subject, to practice.

From the point of view of method it must be said that in this field the question is always postulated in a one-sided metaphysical way. But it is not so much a matter of mistakes in method or logic; the main trouble is the repudiation of materialist positions in cognition, in the one-sided conception which, as P. V. Kopnin rightly puts it, leads "...to what is, essentially, the complete separation of thought from objective reality".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 38, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> P. V. Kopnin, *Lenin's Philosophical Ideas and Logic*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1969, p. 152 (in Russian).

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 147.



The ontological and epistemological positions in Marxism-Leninism are unified. The repudiation of "epistemological realism" or, in other words, of the Leninist dialectical-materialist theory of cognition, implies denial of the significance of the objective world, and, as applied to the problem of man, to the dialectics of the essence and activity of man, it means denying the significance and need to know objective social relations, the laws of their development. But only the dialectical-materialist cognition of these relations, cognition on the basis of correct reflection of the laws of development of the social processes, makes it possible to overcome the limitations of the pre-Marxian conceptions, to extend the problem of man beyond the bounds of anthropological, idealist theories. Only scientific cognition of the dialectics of the individual and society makes it possible to overcome the various utopian illusions and link up the problem of man with real social relations and, on this basis, with critical, practical revolutionary activity by men in the shape of classes, parties, masses and individuals.

It follows that *the dialectical-materialist aspect of the problem of man is organically connected and united with the practical activity of people understanding and transforming the world, with practical social struggle, with the revolutionary activity of the mass of the people.*

It therefore seems to me completely wrong to claim, as do some philosophers abroad, that the theory of cognition was built up and expounded by Lenin in the form of a purely metaphysical theory of reflection, and that this has led to underestimation of the active side of the subject, of practice.

In recent years the question of Lenin's attitude to the practical activity of the subject, to practice, has been considered in a number of works by Western philosophers, particularly in Roger Garaudy's book *Lénine*.<sup>1</sup>

At first glance it would appear that Garaudy rightly stresses the exceptional importance that Lenin attached to the historical initiative of human beings, of the mass of the people and of individuals. But one can scarcely agree with his assertion that recognition of the historical initiative of

the masses and the individual constitutes the "essence of Leninism". Garaudy also crudely misrepresents Lenin's evolution in declaring that up to 1905 he treated the question of historical development entirely from the positions of Karl Kautsky's metaphysical evolutionism and continued to do so mainly up to 1914. One cannot fail to note the fact either that Garaudy's presentation of Lenin's understanding of the principle of activity in his book devoted specifically to Lenin is unnecessarily abstract and completely ignores such important factors as the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leading role of the working class and its revolutionary party. The point is that both in this work and in his others, particularly his *For a French Model of Socialism* and *The Great Turning-Point of Socialism*, Garaudy misinterprets the social consequences of the scientific and technological revolution and, in effect, writes off the whole question of the leading role of the working class, repudiates the role of the revolutionary communist party during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism and the building of socialist society. In the light of what has been said it is not hard to see that Garaudy's arguments about the "historical initiative" of the masses and the individual in Leninism dissolve into purely abstract assertions.

In reality, Lenin's theoretical legacy pays enormous attention to man's active side, to his social practical revolutionary activity. Although Lenin wrote no special treatise on the subject, his works, particularly those connected with the socialist revolution, with the tasks of building the new socialist society, dealt broadly and incisively with the problem of the activity of the subject, the working masses and the individual. This is one of the main implications of Lenin's ideas on proletarian democracy, on the socialist state, on drawing the broad masses into the work of government, and particularly his proposition that "all citizens must take part in the work of the courts and in the government of the country"<sup>2</sup>, and much else.

Lenin frequently stressed that the experience of the millions can show specific paths and forms of development

<sup>1</sup> R. Garaudy, *Lénine*, Paris, 1968.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 135.

for the new state, that the decisive condition for the victory of socialism is the involvement of the "lowest of the low" in historical creativity.<sup>1</sup>

Creative human activity is implied in Lenin's ideas on socialist labour as creative human activity, on the need for development of the individual's self-awareness as a citizen, on the individual's ideological-political and moral progress, on the mounting role of the masses in the creation of culture and hence on the tasks of the cultural revolution, on the significance of public opinion, on the need for ruthless struggle against all forms of bureaucracy, and many others. This is something more than mere epistemological postulation of the problem of the active side of the subject. It may be suggested that this is not an "anthropological" but a social postulation of the problem of man. Of course, it is. But it is an approach and a genuinely humanistic, theoretical solution of the problem that envisages not merely the activity of privileged individuals but provision of conditions for the all-round creative activity of all members of society. Lenin linked the creative activity of the subject, of the millions of the working people with the depth and speed of social development, of social progress.

Lenin believed profoundly in the inexhaustible creative potential of man, in the creative abilities of the common people crushed by the social oppression of exploiting society and spiritually enslaved by it. The theoretical expression of this faith was recognition of the decisive role of the masses, the working people, in the development of history, a recognition that discarded the subjective-idealist conception of the "hero" and the "mob", the contemptuous, lordly view of the masses as something faceless and amorphous, and the aristocratic snobbery towards them characteristic of the ideology of modern imperialism.

Some critics of Leninism may detect certain elements of cosmocentrism in the postulates I have analysed. But those critics who counterpose "anthropocentrism" to "cosmocentrism" do not take into account the special way in which Marxism-Leninism deals with the problem of man, the organic unity of the social and the anthropological in the

<sup>1</sup> *Lenin Miscellany*, XI, p. 10 (in Russian).

Marxist-Leninist conception of humanism. This unity has always been determined by the socio-historical practice of the masses of the people, the socio-historical practice of humanity as a whole. The recognition of this unity was the greatest achievement of social science and in no sense implied repudiation of the problem of man, "anthropological" or otherwise. On the contrary only this scientific approach to the problem made it practically possible for what Lenin called the ordinary representative of the masses, and not just a few privileged individuals, to reveal his innate powers, his gifts and abilities. This lofty aim could be achieved, Lenin taught, only in the process of the conscious practical revolutionary, creative activity of all members of society, collectively and individually.

The unity of the ontological-epistemological and social aspects of the problem of man in Leninism is expressed in the *active-revolutionary character of communist humanism*, which will be dealt with in greater detail in the next section. Here it is necessary only to point out the great significance of any particular interpretation of the concept of *practice*. As has been said, a great many people nowadays are writing about practice. Some of the "critics" of Leninism ever more persistently concentrate attention on the "problem of practice" instead of the *basic problem of philosophy*. Many write of the need to include practice as a component of the structure of the individual personality. There would not appear to be anything particularly new in this last proposal. It is well known that Lenin always urged us to judge people not by their words but by their practical conduct. Without resorting to philosophical or sociological terminology, he always attached great importance to the practical activity of the subject. "...By what criteria are we to judge the *real* 'thoughts and feelings' of *real* individuals? Naturally, there can be only one such criterion—the *actions* of these individuals. And since we are dealing only with social 'thoughts and feelings', one should add: the *social actions* of individuals, i.e., *social facts*."<sup>1</sup> But the point is that in the work of many Western philosophers the concept of practice does not go beyond its existentialist interpretation and assumes an entirely subjectivist character. This is even

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 405.



more intolerable when one is discussing not merely the structure of the individual personality but the problem of humanism, of man in his humanist aspect.

The problem of humanism cannot be analysed and solved on the basis of a subjectivist interpretation of practice. The scientific analysis and theoretical solution of this problem demand, as Lenin taught, all-round consideration of the *socio-historical practice* of the masses, of the peoples, of humanity as a whole.

#### 4. Active-Revolutionary Character of Marxist-Leninist Humanism. Criticism of Abstract Humanism

Having revealed the anti-scientific nature of the idealist conceptions of bourgeois humanism based on individualism, Marxism-Leninism, as we have seen, linked the question of the liberation of the individual with liberation of the whole mass of the working people, particularly the working class.

Instead of illusions and abstract dreams of human happiness, instead of middle-class philanthropy, hollow sentimentality and compassion for man in general, humanism in Marxism-Leninism took the shape of effective revolutionary struggle for the abolition of social conditions condemning the majority of mankind to capitalist exploitation, for the creation of a higher, communist form of human society.

Thus, for the first time in the history of humanist ideas the problem of man, his freedom and his happiness, was lifted out of the framework of religious-idealist, abstract-ethical and psychological systems and organically linked with the struggle and victory of the working class, with creation of the highest and most progressive social system known to history. This brought about a radical change in the nature of humanism and made it effective in the revolutionary sense. Referring to this feature of proletarian humanism, Maxim Gorky wrote: "For the first time in the history of mankind genuine love of man is being organised as a creative force. It has made its aim the liberation of

hundreds of millions of the working people from the inhuman and senseless power of a tiny minority...."<sup>1</sup>

In their opposition to scientific communism bourgeois ideologists and their Right-wing reformist associates have tried persistently for a long time to reduce the question of communism to a mere abstract-ethical ideal. This, for example, is the basis of the whole system of "ethical socialism" evolved by the Right socialists. They deal with the problem of the individual, the problem of humanism within the same narrow, abstract-ethical framework.

Regarding the moral problem as primary and self-sufficient, the idealists ignore or deny the objective historical necessity for the establishment of socialism. Having proclaimed socialism merely a moral ideal, they reduce all social and political questions of the class struggle of the proletariat to moral questions as well.

It was no accident, therefore, that the founders of Marxism took a very firm stand against basing socialism on such moral principles as "justice" and "humanity", against the idealistic "derivation" of socialism from "universal love of man" and "general human aspirations" on the part of Max Stirner<sup>2</sup> and other representatives of petty-bourgeois socialism. "From the State founded on love," Marx wrote, "which is Saint Max's own fabrication, he here derives communism which then, of course, also remains an exclusively Stirnerian communism. Saint Sancho knows only egoism on the one hand or the claim to receive the loving services, pity and alms of people on the other hand. Outside and above this dilemma nothing exists for him at all."<sup>3</sup>

Marx and Engels are particularly sarcastic about the attempts of the so-called "true socialists" to dissolve socialism and communism into the abstractly interpreted humanism that was perfectly expressed in Hermann Zemmig's article "Communism, Socialism, Humanism".

Quoting from this article, "All quibbles about names are resolved in *humanism*; wherefore communists, wherefore

<sup>1</sup> M. Gorky, *Collected Works* (in thirty volumes), Vol. 27, p. 235 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> The literary pseudonym of Kaspar Schmidt (1806-1856), a German Young Hegelian, an ideologist of bourgeois individualism and anarchism.

<sup>3</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1968, p. 230.

socialists? We are *human beings*," the founders of Marxism added some lines from Heine's *The World Inside Out*:

*Swim not, brothers, against the stream,  
That's only a useless thing!  
Let us climb up on the Temprow Hill  
And cry: God save the King!*

And then they ironically exclaim: "Wherefore human beings, wherefore beasts, wherefore plants, wherefore stones? We are bodies!"<sup>1</sup>

Engels' *True Socialists* is written in the same sarcastic vein.

The theoretical basis of these petty-bourgeois abstract, humanistic conceptions that were widespread in those days was to be found in *Feuerbach's anthropologism*.

Pre-Marxist social thought relied theoretically on the concept of *man in the abstract*, man in general, divorced from all socio-political, economic, legal and other relations, and hence from political activity. In such isolation from his concrete historical ties man could figure only as a biological species, as some immutable and for ever constant quantity. From the "immutable" nature and mentality of this abstract being were derived all political and legal institutions, all ethical and aesthetic standards, the whole structure of social life. Naturally, therefore, one of the chief aims of the founders of Marxism was to overcome this idealist, anti-historical conception, and this became a decisive factor in the building of a scientific theory of humanism. Engels made a tremendous contribution in this field. His profound and all-embracing criticism of the concept of "man in the abstract" which had occupied so important a place in pre-Marxist sociology and ethics, particularly in the philosophy of Feuerbach, provided the methodological base for the further criticism of abstract humanism. This criticism was particularly effective in its analysis of Feuerbach's notions of the ethics and philosophy of religion.

Engels showed the lack of substance in Feuerbach's principle of "universal love" and the effort to uphold this

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1968, p. 526.

principle in a society which by its antagonistic nature cannot fail to generate and foster hatred among people belonging to classes with diametrically opposed social interests and aspirations. Quite justifiably he reproached Feuerbach for, in effect, reproducing and defending hypocritical Christian principles that had been totally discredited: "Love one another—fall into each other's arms regardless of distinctions of sex or estate—a universal orgy of reconciliation!"<sup>1</sup>

In his *Ludwig Feuerbach* Engels firmly defends the *class character of humanism and morality*. Repudiation of class analysis and estimation of equality, freedom, good and evil, justice and injustice inevitably lead to deception and self-deception, to lifeless, contemplative declarations. "...The Feuerbachian theory of morals fares like all its predecessors. It is designed to suit all periods, all peoples and all conditions, and precisely for that reason it is never and nowhere applicable. It remains, as regards the real world, as powerless as Kant's categorical imperative."<sup>2</sup>

Engels' criticism of Feuerbach's abstract humanism is logically linked with his criticism of Proudhonism. In his work *The Housing Question* he came out sharply against Proudhon's idea of abstract justice, and said that believing in "abstract justice" was like believing in "social phlogiston".

We thus find that in the works of Marx and Engels the problem of man was liberated for the first time from the abstract anthropologism that had fettered it, and was analysed on the plane of the dialectics of the general and the particular in their organic connection with the existing social relations and, above all, with class struggle of the proletariat, with the practical activity of the individual, of classes and masses, with the interests and prospects of the development of man and human civilisation and the communist future.

The founders of Marxism saw the achievement of man's free all-round development precisely in the class struggle of the proletariat, in the need to abolish capitalism.

Characteristically, in a letter to Engels of April 30, 1868,

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Vol. 3, p. 359.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 359-60.



Marx writes, expounding the plan of his study of the rate of profit: "...we have, in conclusion, the *class struggle*, into which the movement and the smash-up of the whole business resolves itself. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Proceeding from the inevitability and significance of the class struggle, Marx and Engels, in contrast to the universal love advocated by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois socialism, resolutely insisted on the need to develop a sense of class hatred of the bourgeoisie among the workers. Engels wrote in his *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, "Communism stands, in principle, above the breach between bourgeoisie and proletariat, recognises only its historic significance for the present, but not its justification for the future: wishes, indeed, to bridge over this chasm, to do away with all class antagonisms. Hence it recognises as justified, so long as the struggle exists, the exasperation of the proletariat towards its oppressors as a necessity, as the most important lever for a labour movement just beginning; but it goes beyond this exasperation, because Communism is a question of humanity and not of the workers alone."<sup>2</sup> With this hatred of exploitation and exploiters Marx and Engels linked the development of a sense of human dignity among the workers, their ability to wage a revolutionary struggle. At the same time, while regarding the class struggle of the proletariat as a condition of its emancipation, they constantly stressed the *unity of the proletariat's class interests with universal human interests*. This idea is expressed in the above quotation, in Marx's and Engels' definition of the proletariat's historic mission, and in their definition of the goals of communist society.

After Marx and Engels the criticism of abstract humanism was further developed in Lenin's works *In Memory of Count Heyden*, in his articles on Leo Tolstoy, particularly his analysis of Tolstoy's ethical teaching and in other works. While acknowledging him as a great artist, Lenin wrote that Tolstoy was nevertheless absurd as a prophet offering new recipes for the salvation of humanity. Lenin believed that any attempt to idealise Tolstoy's teaching, his doctrines

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Britain*, Moscow, 1962, p. 334.

of "conscience" and "universal love", "non-resistance", abstract "moral perfection" and so on would cause direct and far-reaching harm to the revolutionary movement. In contrast to the limited and unscientific principles of anthropological humanism, Marxism-Leninism considers the problem of man on the basis of the materialist understanding in history. Because it rests on this scientific theoretical foundation the Marxist-Leninist solution of the problem of man is and remains indissolubly linked with the class struggle of the proletariat and the whole mass of the working people, and in this sense, on the plane of achieving conditions for the actual realisation of humanism, it is subordinated to the aims of this struggle—the overthrow of capitalism and the victory of socialism and communism. So the "anthropological" and ethical aspects of the problem of humanism emerged for the first time in the history of humanist studies in unity with the socio-political, practical and revolutionary progressive forces of society.

Developing Marx's idea that putting genuine humanism consistently into practice is connected with the laws of the destruction of capitalism and the victory of socialism, Lenin started from the proposition that the historical necessity of the victory of socialism is determined by objective laws, the laws of development of capitalist society operating independently of human consciousness. He stressed that the historic service rendered by Marxism lies in the conversion of socialism from a utopia built on the shifting soil of abstract ethical principles into a science based on knowledge of the objective laws of historical development. Analysing G. Mikhailovsky's idealist aesthetic postulates, Lenin wrote: "It is clear that, applied to sociology, these ideas could provide nothing but a utopia or a vapid morality which ignores the class struggle going on in society."<sup>1</sup>

Rejecting the idealist ethical approach to society and socialism, Lenin noted that in theory Marxism "...subordinates the 'ethical standpoint' to the 'principle of causality'; in practice it reduces it to the class struggle".<sup>2</sup>

The ideological opponents of Marxism-Leninism, the representatives of "ethical socialism" and anthropological

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 420.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 421.

humanism see the Marxist-Leninist theory of the class struggle as socialism's "fall from grace", its repudiation of humanism, of the problem of man, scorning of his interests, freedom and so on. In reality, however, Marx's, Engels' and Lenin's development of ideas on the class struggle of the proletariat, on the working people as the subject of the historical process, on emancipation of the masses from all forms of oppression, have been and remain the concrete expression of the revolutionary effectiveness of Marxist-Leninist humanism.

In the present-day ideological struggle the connection between humanism and the class struggle of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a key question. Half a century ago it hardly went beyond the bounds of theoretical debate, whereas today it is resolved by the practice of hundreds of millions of people and, above all, the international working class.

Life has justly and convincingly castigated all narrow anthropological, abstract-ethical, subjective-psychological and other conceptions of humanism based on individualism. They have all revealed themselves to be bankrupt in the face of the social antagonisms of bourgeois society.

The historic achievements of socialism in consistently solving the problem of man, the growth of civil and national self-awareness on the part of the working people of the capitalist world and in the countries of the "third world" are organically linked with the revolutionary movement of the international proletariat and all the working people of our age, with the Great October Socialist Revolution, with its influence on the course and rate of development of modern history. "Only struggle educates the exploited class. Only struggle discloses to it the magnitude of its own power, widens its horizon, enhances its abilities, clarifies its mind, forges its will."<sup>1</sup> This splendidly profound idea of Lenin's provides a criterion for determining the role of the class struggle in the development of the working people as individuals as well.

Contrary to all the evidence the class struggle is "traditionally" treated by the ideological opponents of Marxism-Leninism as a factor that destroys the individual, his spiri-

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 241.

tual and moral fibre. In reality, however, man's progress as an individual depends on the interaction of social and individual factors, the key factor being the level of development of man's "social nature".

Juxtaposing the objective necessity of historical development to the moral ideal, the ideologists of anti-communism maintain that recognition of the class struggle of the proletariat and the historical inevitability of the victory of socialism justifies all forms of violence and on this illusory "basis" they assert that Marxism-Leninism "ignores" the moral aspect of the problem of humanism, and moral values in general.

Yet is it not well known that the political and moral ends and means of the struggle of the proletariat, like those of all other classes, as a matter of fact, form an organic unity? The truly humanist aims of the proletariat's class struggle, which consist in its unselfish efforts to abolish exploitation of man by man and create conditions for the free all-round harmonious development of every individual, for the triumph of humane relations, demand similarly noble means of struggle. This is why, proceeding from the humanist ideas of the proletariat's struggle for liberation, Marx, Engels and Lenin repeatedly pointed out the *possibility of peaceful means of struggle*. Speaking of the socialist revolution, the ideologists of the proletariat did not regard it as essential under all conditions to use force against the bourgeoisie. In 1871 Marx wrote a famous letter to Kugelmann in which he admitted the possibility of the peaceful development of the revolution in the Britain and America of those days. Well known, too, are Marx's speech at a meeting in Amsterdam, Lenin's propositions on the possibility of the peaceful development of revolution in Russia following the February Revolution, under conditions of dual power, and also after the October Revolution.

"When there is no reactionary force to be fought against there can be no question of the use of any revolutionary force,"<sup>1</sup> wrote Frederick Engels. Elaborating on this idea after the October Revolution, Lenin said: "Coercion is effective against those who want to restore their rule. But at this stage the significance of force ends, and after that only

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 38, S. 489-90.



influence and example are effective. We must show the significance of communism in practice, by example."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin made a strict distinction between the concept of "social coercion" and "armed violence", between "revolution" and "war". He viewed the necessity for the use of armed force as means to be adopted in the last resort in defence of the revolution, in defence of its gains against the violence of the enemies of the revolution. There is no place in our ideal, Lenin wrote, for the use of force against people. "Our very struggle against the exploiters," he wrote when the Soviets were in power, "was taken from experience. If we have sometimes been condemned on account of it, we can say, 'Dear capitalist gentlemen, you have only yourselves to blame. If you had not offered such savage, senseless, insolent, and desperate resistance, if you had not joined in an alliance with the world bourgeoisie, the revolution would have assumed more peaceful forms.'"<sup>2</sup>

Believing in the unity of the humanist aims of the revolution and the means of their realisation, Lenin stressed that peaceful development of the revolution was to be preferred: "That would have been the easiest and the most advantageous course for the people. This course would have been the least painful..."<sup>3</sup> This truly humanist approach to the question of the relation between ends and means Lenin extended to the question of the attitude to be adopted to war. "We know, we know only too well, the incredible misfortunes that war brings to the workers and peasants. For that reason our attitude to this question must be most cautious and circumspect."<sup>4</sup>

This approach to the question of war found theoretical expression in Lenin's understanding of the question of *peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems*, which has been developed in the documents published by the CPSU and other fraternal parties and the international communist movement.

Distorting Lenin's positions and Leninism, making profit out of the events connected with the cult of Stalin's persona-

lity that the Soviet Communist Party has subjected to severe criticism, the anti-communists in unison with revisionists of every kind rant about the "contradictions" between the goals of socialism and the means of achieving them, about the "Machiavellianism" of the Communists in choosing means to attain their communist ideals and so on.

In recent years these fantasies have gained wide support in "Left" opportunism, particularly in Maoism, in the struggle against communist humanism.

The adventurist position of Maoism over the question of socialist revolution, its denial of the possibility of any peaceful transition to socialism, the absolutising of forcible methods of struggle of the working class, its attitude of condonance over the question of thermonuclear war—all this is an obvious contradiction to the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the question of the use of force, of war and revolution, of the unity of attitude towards class and towards humanity in general.

The "theoretical" basis of the position of the "Left" revisionists rests on repudiation of the elementary demands of dialectics in understanding contemporary reality, in analysing the laws of the development of the class struggle in modern conditions and in ignoring the new balance of forces on the international scene and within the capitalist countries.

Such departures from Marxism-Leninism fully coincide with the interest of anti-communism, which resorts to various philosophical tricks to persuade the masses that the Communists are "blood-thirsty" and "ruthless" and have no sense of moral responsibility towards people and mankind in general. But the efforts of the anti-communists are futile. Through experience of life itself the peoples of the world are becoming more and more convinced that the Marxist-Leninist parties are indeed working consistently and with a high sense of responsibility for world peace, that today it is the Communists who are making the pace in world affairs.

As Leonid Brezhnev said in the CC report to the 24th CPSU Congress, "*the Soviet Union has countered the aggressive policy of imperialism with its policy of active defence of peace and strengthening of international security*. The main lines of this policy are well known. Our Party, our

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 457.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, pp. 211-12.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, p. 185.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 33, p. 148.

Soviet state in co-operation with the fraternal socialist countries and other peace-loving states, and with the wholehearted support of many millions of people throughout the world, have now for many years been waging a struggle on these lines, taking a stand for the cause of peace and friendship among nations."<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

*The present period of the development of Marxist-Leninist philosophy* is outstanding for the special attention it pays to the problems of humanism. This interest is not imposed on Marxists—as it may seem to some people from outside—by bourgeois philosophy, or by bourgeois Marxology and anti-communism, although, of course, these factors do have an effect. In the socialist countries it is evoked largely by the special features of the present stage in socialist and communist construction, by the problems involved in moulding a fully developed, creative personality, the creation of new, communist relations among people, that is to say, by the further practical realisation of the Marxist-Leninist humanist programme, and also by the development of the communist movement and the tasks of the present-day ideological struggle.

As was noted in our introductory chapter, the last few decades have seen a large number of books and articles by Soviet and foreign Marxists that go deeply into various aspects of the problem. Some of these aspects have become the subject of philosophical debate. The question of the attitude of Marxism to humanism, for instance, was sharply debated by French philosophers between March 1965 and February 1966.<sup>2</sup> Even before the debate took place L. Althusser in his book *Pour Marx*, published in Paris in 1965, came out with a juxtaposition of humanism and scientific communism. Defining humanism as merely an ideological phenomenon, he tries to prove that Marxism has broken with humanism in general. "Since the concept of humanism is not scientific but ideological," he writes, "we maintain that this concept points to the sum total of realities but,

unlike a scientific concept, it does not provide the means of cognising them. It indicates part of the ideological form of existence but does not reveal their essence. The mingling of the two categories (humanism and science—*M.P.*) would entail repudiation of all cognition and would lead to mistakes."<sup>1</sup>

Althusser regards the correlation of the ideological and the scientific as an attempt to combine incompatible factors: "One must not try to avoid the most testing question of all," he writes, "that historical materialism, which investigates communist society, will be able one day to do without ideology, whether it is a matter of morals, art or the reflection of the world."<sup>2</sup> Later he expressed these ideas in the French philosophers' discussion on the problem of humanism, with reference to the "early" and "mature" Marx. Continuing to juxtapose philosophy as a science to ideology, he maintained that on a strictly scientific level one could and should speak of the "theoretical anti-humanism" of Marx, who, he claimed, "completed his researches by recognising and cognising humanism itself as ideology".

Analysis of the French philosophers' discussion shows that the methodological point of departure in this and in other discussions of the problem under consideration is the interpretation of the actual concept of "humanism". Without going into the question of the correlation of ideology and science, we should note that those who counterpose humanism to science usually make no distinction between "humanism" and "humaneness" and regard humanism purely as a moral problem and often, as a value, ethical category.

It is this traditional equating of humanism with vague moral notions and demands that provides Althusser with a reason for separating humanism (an illusion that has no place in a scientific, "demystifying" world outlook) from scientific Marxism and even for discovering an antithesis between the two. But the concepts of "humanism" and "humaneness", as has already been noted, are not identical. The concept of "humanism" expresses in Marxism an inte-

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Documents, Moscow, 1971, pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> See *La nouvelle critique*, No. 164-172, 1965 et 1966.

<sup>1</sup> L. Althusser, *Pour Marx*, Paris, 1965, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.



grated even if multi-level philosophico-ethical, sociological, socio-political *conception* of man, his present and future, of any given model of man and also the conditions of its achievement, while the concept of "humaneness" expresses merely humanity, a moral attitude towards man.

But even the value judgements of Marxist ethics, let alone the integrated conception of such a complex problem as the problem of man, have an objective source, are based on an objective foundation, on the laws of social development, and are verified in accordance with these laws, with the objective demands of the age, and thus correspond to scientific demands. As for the argument that the concept of "humanism" does not provide the means of cognising "existing realities", it must be remarked that very many scientific concepts not only of the humanitarian but also the natural sciences, taken in isolation, do not in themselves supply the *means* of cognition. One has only to mention such philosophical concepts as "society", "class", "matter", "consciousness" and so on.

When considering the question of the correlation of science and humanism one must take into account the *fundamental* distinction between Marxist-Leninist humanism and various forms of abstract humanism, particularly its abstract-ethical form. The Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism, as already mentioned, developed the struggle against abstract-ethical conceptions and differs fundamentally from them in its revolutionary effectiveness, based on the scientific understanding of the problem of man, on the totality of philosophical questions connected with it, on cognition—also scientific—of the way to solve the problem.

In limiting the question of the means of cognition as the criterion of scientificity by the very concept of "humanism", Althusser seems to have ignored this distinction, just as he ignores the complex character of the problem of humanism in general.

From the foregoing exposition of the problem under consideration it is clear that the founders of Marxism-Leninism were indeed resolutely opposed to the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologies of their day, as illusory consciousness. They sharply criticised abstract humanism, based on metaphysical anthropologism, on abstract philosophical categories of the subject, of ideal essence and the abstract

nature of man, abstract love of man and so on. But does this mean that they repudiated in general the concept of ideology, believing that any ideology is false consciousness contradictory to science? That they repudiated humanism in general?

The discussion of the French philosophers showed that some of its participants, L. Althusser and his supporters, for example, answer this question in the affirmative. But such an answer is possible only at the price of repudiating the historical approach to the development of social thought, only by ignoring the social nature and historically determined social function of ideology as a system of views and ideas of definite classes of society. Such a metaphysical approach is incorrect even in relation to bourgeois ideology. The analysis provided in the first chapter of the development of humanist ideas justifies the assertion that bourgeois ideology was not always a form of illusory, false consciousness. Within the framework of this ideology there were also efforts—historically limited, it is true—to discover a scientific solution to the problem of man. This makes it even more wrong to identify the ideologies of such opposed classes as the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, to ignore the fundamental distinction between the reactionary bourgeois and revolutionary, proletarian, Marxist ideologies.

We absolutely agree that *Marxism arose and developed strictly as a science*. But it was at the same time, and still is, the ideology of the proletariat. The fundamental distinction between this ideology and bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologies lies in its organic unity with science. Indisputably, Marxist-Leninist ideology, like any other, is connected with practical life and performs a great social function. But for this very reason it is incompatible with myth and excludes myth. The strength of Marxist-Leninist ideology lies in its scientificity.

Having proclaimed abstraction and systematised totality as the criterion of scientificity, Althusser excludes from the methodology of scientific knowledge any resort to immediate reality, excludes immediate contact with history, with actual practice. But is it not clear that Marxism would cease to be a science if it relied only on investigation of formal structures and schemes divorced from the real practice and activity of man?

Another participant in the discussion, Michel Simon, asserts, for instance, that if humanism is considered on the purely philosophical plane, Marxism is not humanism. Humanism, he maintains, is just what Marx broke away from; it is the ideology from which Marxist theory at one time drew certain ideas but which it subsequently, we are told, completely repudiated. Marx's break with philosophical humanism, he continues, signifies the transition from "ethical communism" to scientific communism, and so on.

But this is inaccurate. In reality, Marx broke with the abstract humanism of the Young Hegelians, with Feuerbachianism, Proudhonism, etc., but not with humanism in general.

We agree with those participants in the French philosophers' discussion who maintained that the crushing blow delivered by Marxist criticism against the speculative anthropology and philosophical myth concerning man's essential nature in no case leads Marxism to "theoretical anti-humanism", that on the contrary, both in theory and practice, it leads to true humanism, i.e., to the theory and practice of the real emancipation of man.

Analysing the French philosophers' discussion on the problem of Marxism and humanism, a plenary session of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, rejecting any attempts to counterpose Marxism as a science to humanism, observed quite rightly: "There is Marxist humanism that is distinct from the abstract humanism by means of which the bourgeoisie camouflages social relations and justifies exploitation and injustice. Marxist humanism stems from the historical task of the working class. The assertion of such humanism does not mean casting aside objective understanding of reality for the sake of a vague impulse of the heart. On the contrary, Marxism is the humanism of our time because it bases its action on a strictly scientific understanding of the world. But it does not separate its understanding of the world from its resolve to change that world for the benefit of all people."<sup>1</sup>

As we have noted, the "Left" opportunists in China, the Maoists, launch particularly bitter attacks against Marxist-Leninist humanism. These attacks on humanism in China

have been observed since 1957. The concept of "humanism" (jentaochui) was even then interpreted by the Maoists in a negative sense. On the one hand, it was identified with certain aspects of Confucianism; on the other, it was regarded as a phenomenon of the European literature of the past. Since then the campaign against Marxist-Leninist humanism in China has gone through several stages, becoming more and more intense and touching upon the most diverse aspects of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice of the class struggle, the aims and practice of socialist construction. These aspects include the problems of what is class and what is universally human in socialist humanism, of the class struggle and humanism, and on this basis, the attitude to be adopted to the humanist ideals and traditions of the past, the problem of man in Marxism-Leninism, the aim of communism, the understanding of liberty, equality and fraternity, the relation of ends and means, the moral ideal of man and much else.

Subsequent events showed that these attacks on Marxist-Leninist humanism were by no means incidental. As early as 1963, for instance, the former director of the department of propaganda of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party delivered an instructional report at an enlarged session of the council of the department of philosophical and social sciences of China in which he inveighed against the humanist substance and principles of the Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, passed at the 22nd Congress, proclaimed them to be "revisionist" and outlined a whole programme of how the social sciences of China should fight communist humanism.

For some time this report was regarded as a programmatic demand of the Chinese Communist Party. About two years later, however, this "programme of struggle" turned out to be insufficiently "revolutionary" and was itself declared—revisionist! Then there began the period of the so-called "cultural revolution", when at the mere mention of the word "humanism" the hungweiping thugs would grab sticks and stones just as Goebbels in his day reached for his revolver at the mention of the word "culture".

The theoretical point of departure for the Chinese opponents of communist humanism was limitation of the concept of "humanism" to the framework of the bourgeois

<sup>1</sup> *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 5-6, 1966, pp. 273-74.



ideology of the past, denial of any continuity in the development of culture and ideology, a sectarian approach to the question of the humanist traditions of the past, to the question of the development of Marxism-Leninism, refusal to acknowledge any possibility of unity between class and universally human attributes in the ideology of the proletariat or in the aims of communism.

Counterposing humanism to the class struggle of the proletariat, excluding any possibility of a peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism, the Maoists declared that humanism is an expression of bourgeois reformism. But it is not a matter of abstract humanism and abstract humanity, which actually do ignore class relations and the class struggle, but of the objective laws of the history of communist humanism, based on scientific cognition, that embodies the aims of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The anti-historical and sectarian approach to humanism have nothing in common with the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat, with the essence of Marxism-Leninism. They merely consolidate the enemy's hostile allegations that socialism and communism repudiate the problem of man, moral values and moral orientation of the individual, that there is a "conflict" between historical necessity, socialism and conscience, that the interpretation of the ends and means of the class struggle is "Machiavellian".

The second question that needs to be considered in connection with the discussions on the question of Marxism-Leninism and humanism that have been held in Marxist and non-Marxist circles is linked with the juxtaposition of "cosmocentrism" to "anthropocentrism" in Marxism, with attempts to break up the integral whole of Marxism-Leninism into autonomous stages and consider them as "humanist", "cosmocentric", and "modern anthropological". The theoretical basis for these attempts rests on juxtaposition of the social aspect of the problem of man to its "anthropological", epistemological-axiological aspect.

Indisputably it would be wrong to imagine the development of the Marxist-Leninist conception of humanism, of man, as a steady process of the simultaneous development of all the aspects and questions it involves. Nonetheless, no matter what aspect of the problem was dealt with at any particular period, the problem of man always figured as an

integral whole, was always understood in the unity of all its aspects—philosophical, sociological, socio-political and anthropological, epistemological and axiological. This was determined by the initial scientific principles of Marxist-Leninist teaching, its attitude to man as a bio-social being, by the aims of Marxist-Leninist theory and by the practice of social life, of the class struggle waged by the proletariat. It is characteristic that even some of the opponents of Marxism, seeking more subtle forms of struggle against its growing influence, feel compelled to write of the integrity and unity of the various problems of humanism in Marxism. G. Girardi, the prominent theorist of Catholicism, for instance, analysing Marxist humanism, writes of the unity of the ontological, methodological, historico-critical and axiological aspects of Marxism and Marxist humanism, its integrity and unity with the doctrine of the class struggle, with revolutionary practice.

"We are speaking of aspects that are to some extent different but essentially at one within the framework of the system. Therefore," he writes, "not one of them can be understood or defined in isolation from the others. They are the 'components' of a single whole."

"...The unity and totality of these various aspects of Marxism are a special feature and one of the sources of the prestige which it enjoys. This unity virtually lends ideal ends a concrete character, embodying them in history and in action; on the other hand, it makes real the concrete analysis of ideal aims, by linking them with the principles of truth and factual values."<sup>1</sup>

Analysis of the development of the Marxist-Leninist conception of man, of humanism, shows, as we have said, the utter theoretical futility of counterposing cosmocentrism and anthropocentrism, attempts to break up and regard as autonomous the stages in the development of Marxism-Leninism, the epistemological, social and anthropological aspects of Marxist-Leninist humanism.

A special feature of the current period in the study of the problem of humanism in the USSR is the more profound analysis of a number of philosophical questions connect-

<sup>1</sup> G. Girardi, *Marxismo e cristianesimo*, Cittadella Editrice, Assisi, 1966.

ed with the understanding of the essential nature of man, the dialectics of essence and existence, freedom and the moral responsibility of the individual, and also questions on the borderline between related sciences such as general and social psychology, morality, applied sociology and so on.

A deeper study is made of the laws of the formation of the individual in conditions of socialism, the totality of questions implied in the dialectics of the interrelation of society, the collective and the individual, social and personal interests, in the development of man as an individual, his distinctive features, particularly psychological features, in the laws of the formation of the individual consciousness, man's intellectual development, his culture and so on.

In the philosophical treatises published by Soviet and foreign Marxists one comes across various approaches to certain questions, particularly to the proposals for the creation within the framework of Marxist philosophy of "philosophical anthropology", "philosophy of man" and their substance; various understandings of the law of the process of eliminating human alienation in socialist society; controversial points of view on various philosophical questions connected with the development of Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism and so on. These scientific controversies naturally demand further special investigation, scientific dialogues that would help to enrich and work out in further detail the Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism, and would contribute to the struggle against the ideological opponents of communism.

We have considered here the formation and development of the Marxist-Leninist conception of humanism as a whole, the special features that distinguish it from previous humanist conceptions. A more profound investigation of its nature is provided by analysis of the philosophico-ethical aspect and socio-political essence of the problem of humanism in our own time.

The chapters that follow are devoted to such an analysis.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ETHICAL CONTENT OF HUMANISM

The ethical conception of man is of fundamental methodological importance in Marxist-Leninist theory of humanism, expressing as it does general views of man pertaining to a particular world outlook, understanding of the dialectic of subjective and objective relationships, the essence of man, the essence and activity of man as an individual of the species and an individual person, man's value and purpose, personal freedom and moral responsibility, and so on.

Since all these questions are treated in some way or other by representatives of many philosophical trends writing about humanism, in analysing the Marxist-Leninist views on the subject we shall also be examining their treatment by certain bourgeois authors.

#### 1. Marxist-Leninist View of the Essence of Man

The question of the essence of man is the point of departure for any philosophical concept of man, for the comprehension and solution of the problem of man in general.

Certain Western theorists even regard it as being of decisive importance in the struggle between the socialist and capitalist worlds. Thus, von Knoeringen writes: "The basic insoluble contradiction which divides the two worlds, lies in the sphere of man's essence, his core, his innermost



being. This is the battlefield where man's future path will be decided".<sup>1</sup>

Allowing for a certain amount of exaggeration in such statements, there is no denying that the question of man's essence does indeed play an important role in the contemporary ideological struggle. This is only natural, since it is basic to our understanding of what kind of person the New Man is to be.

As we have seen, the development of Marxist theory of man, Marxist humanism, involved a process of overcoming anthropological, religious and idealist views, which, despite certain differences—the theological view, for example, was based on the idea of a supernatural, divine principle in man, while idealist philosophy regarded mind as the determining factor in man's essence—are all essentially related. Marx and Engels had this connection in mind when they wrote: "*Real Humanism* has no more dangerous enemy in Germany than *spiritualism* or *speculative idealism* which substitutes '*self-consciousness*' or the '*spirit*' for the *real individual man* and teaches with the evangelist 'that the spirit quickeneth everything and that the flesh profiteth not'".<sup>2</sup>

The anthropological views of the pre-Marxian materialists were also, in the final analysis, idealist. Although the anthropologists rejected religious-idealist illusions and regarded man as a sensual being, defending his right to earthly pleasure and happiness, they failed to recognise the social nature of man, and biologised it, thinking in terms of man in general—an abstract, extra-temporal man whose essence was permanent and invariable.

Marxism put forward a fundamentally new concept of man, quite different from anything found in the earlier history of philosophy. Its classic expression is to be found in Marx's theses on Feuerbach. "Feuerbach resolves the religious essence into the *human* essence. But the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the *totality of the social relations*."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Die neue Gesellschaft*, 1961, No. 111, S. 170.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family or Critique of Critical Critique*, Moscow, 1956, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Vol. 1, p. 14 (emphasis added—M.P.).

This proposition represents a logical development of the ideas Marx expressed in his early work, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, where he examined the question of man's essence in its socio-philosophical as well as its philosophical aspect, in terms of the interaction of essence and existence. The whole problem of alienation and its elimination is examined on this basis.

Marx related the concept of man's essence to his social nature, his activity as a social being, the creative nature of labour, whereby man himself is formed, and to man's active transformation of the world.

The idea of the formative role of the social factor was not new: it had been expressed, in particular, in the views of the French materialists on the role of social environment. However, for the eighteenth-century French materialists social environment meant the established form of government, the existing social order determining the level of people's awareness, or to be more precise, the level of awareness of the rulers. More important, their concept of the relationship between man and environment was metaphysical and denied man his active role, ignoring his social nature and relationships and reducing the relationship between man and society to that of individual and environment.

In Marxism the idea of social environment is an intricate compound of social conditions, the social world understood as the totality of social relations in their dialectical unity and interaction with man's social activity, objective and subjective, social and biological.<sup>1</sup>

Drawing attention to the weaknesses of earlier materialism, Marx wrote: "The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances. . . .

<sup>1</sup> The question of social environment and its role in the development of the individual personality is treated in several recent works published in the USSR, among them L. P. Buyeva's *Social Environment and the Consciousness of the Individual* (Moscow, 1968), I. S. Kon's *Sociology of the Individual* (Moscow, 1967) and *Sociology in the USSR*, Vols. 1, 2 (Moscow 1965) (all in Russian). Further titles may be found in the Bibliography.

"The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can be conceived and rationally understood only as *revolutionising practice*."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, Marx regarded existing social relations and conditions, as well as the laws of social development, as the result and expression of man's practical activity, both in the form of a live active process and as objectively embodied in the means of production, the achievements of science and technology and the arts, social institutions and so on. "We have before us the *objectified essential powers* of man in the form of *sensuous, alien, useful objects*...displayed in *ordinary material industry*."<sup>2</sup>

Marx criticised the earlier materialists, notably Feuerbach, for their metaphysical treatment of the essence of man, for the way that "the thing (*Gegenstand*), reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object* (*Objekt*) or of *contemplation* (*Anschauung*), but not as *human sensuous activity, practice*, not subjectively".<sup>3</sup>

Consequently, the Marxian concept of the *complex of all the social relations* determining man's essence differs essentially from the metaphysical category of "environment", existing as though separate from and independent of human activity. Marx refers to relationships taking shape in the live and many-sided process of human activity in which man himself is formed. Lenin, who attached great importance to this thesis of Marx's, wrote "concretely and historically determined" in brackets after the words "complex of all", thereby stressing the dialectical nature of the process.<sup>4</sup> This is a further illustration of the fact that the founders of Marxism-Leninism rejected the view of social relations as an invariable factor independent of man.

In Marxism, then, *social environment* is regarded as a second Nature, transformed by man through the action of objective laws and in accordance with man's historical demands and aims, the product of the activity of many generations, in a constant process of change and renewal

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Vol. 1, pp. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Moscow, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 53.

through the practical activity of the subject, and existing as a necessary element of the process and not as a dead conglomeration of things and objects.

The eminent Soviet psychologist S. L. Rubinstein uses the term "world" (*mir*) to designate the concept of second Nature. The term signifies nature involving human activity or "humanised nature", nature transformed by human action.

Unfortunately, the Marxist-Leninist concept of the essence of man has not always been fully and correctly presented in Marxist, including Soviet, philosophical, and especially popular-science literature. The concept of the totality of all social relations has sometimes been narrowed down, and there has been a tendency to ignore the interaction of the subjective and the objective in the formation and development of man, the importance of material activity, the dialectic of the social and the biological, and hence of the individual as a person and the individual as a representative of the species, the importance of personal characteristics.

These and other errors and inaccuracies have been used, and still are used, by ideological opponents of Marxism to distort the Marxist-Leninist treatment of the question under discussion. The thesis that *production relations are decisive in the totality of the social relations* has frequently been taken by them as meaning that Marxism reduces the essence of man to economic, production relations. Some falsifiers go even further and try to ascribe to Marxism the absurd view that the essence of man is determined by the level of development of production, the production forces and technology. It is claimed that Marxism "destroys" the individual, treating him as no more than a "producer", a "fragment of matter", an object devoid of "spirituality", "intellectuality" and so on. This particularly applies to the works of P. Bigo, M. d'Arcy, A. Etcheverry, and I. Bochen-ski, for example.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, the concept of "the totality of the social relations"

<sup>1</sup> P. Bigo, *Marxisme et humanisme. Introduction à l'œuvre économique de Karl Marx*, Paris, 1953; M. d'Arcy, *Communism and Christianity*, London, 1956; A. Etcheverry, *Le conflit actuel des humanismes*, Paris, 1955; J. Maritain, *Pour une philosophie de l'éducation*, Paris, 1959; H. d'Lubac, *Le Drame de l'humanisme athée*, Paris, 1959.



includes not only material production relations but class, political, legal, state, national, moral, religious and other relations, as well as the personal micro-environment.

This is not to say that all these factors are accorded an equal role. Material production relations are, in the final analysis, decisive but the totality of the existing social relations and such social factors as social psychology, public opinion, the micro-environment, family, and so on, and most certainly personal characteristics all have a definite influence on man's spiritual world and help shape the individual personality.

Quite as un-Marxist as the idealist denial of the decisive role of material production relations is the vulgar materialist attempt to *absolutise* the role of these relations.

Let us examine the question of *the influence of class relations*. Belonging to a particular class, and especially participation in its struggle, the influence of class psychology, and so on, are what *ultimately* determine the social essence of the individual, his standpoint and views, and orientation. But the Marxist view of the importance of class in the shaping of the individual has nothing in common with vulgar sociology, which reduces everything to class relations, with absolutisation of the "class-individual" relationship. As Lenin wrote, "Nobody, of course, ever thought of ascribing to a social group an existence independent of the individual forming it".<sup>1</sup> When we say that the individual's social features are ultimately determined by class relations, the class he belongs to, we are merely stating a general tendency. Deviations from this rule are possible and can be understood provided we go beyond "class-individual" relationships and take into account the totality of factors relating to a particular individual, such as his micro-environment, family, the people with whom he consorts, his personal, including psychological, characteristics, his private world, personal interests and so on.

History is full of examples of people who rose above the narrow selfish interests of their class and sometimes even expressed the views of other, progressive classes. The founders of Marxism-Leninism were themselves not of proletarian origin, and a large number of scientists and

scholars, artists and intellectuals from other classes have gone over to the side of the working class, joining the Communist and workers' parties, throughout this century, and never more so than today.

John Reed, for example, although brought up and educated in a privileged upper-class environment, became a communist revolutionary. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the majority of his fellow-students at Harvard continued to be firm supporters of the capitalist system, and subscribed to capitalist morality, aesthetic tastes, and the whole system of bourgeois ideas.

There have also been cases of betrayal of the interests of the working class, of individual workers deserting to their class enemies. But this does not refute the role of class relations: it simply shows the complex and contradictory nature of social relations, especially in societies where social antagonisms exist, and the influence of individual features as well as class struggle on a person's character and behaviour.

*Political and legal relations* are of tremendous importance in this process and it would be a grave mistake to underestimate their role. Suffice it to recall the corruptive influence of fascism on masses of people in Nazi Germany, Mussolini's Italy, Spain and Portugal today, and those imperialist countries in which the last vestiges of bourgeois democracy are being cast away and political reaction is setting in.

There is another factor which, although not determinant since it is itself conditional by class relations, cannot be overlooked when examining the question of the shaping of the individual, and that is *national relations and national psychology*. National and race relations in the imperialist age lead to suppression of people's talents and abilities and make great inroads on human personal dignity. As a result, however, the more strong-willed people wage a struggle against imperialist oppression for national emancipation, in the course of which their character and spiritual, including moral, qualities are moulded. It is impossible to divorce the spiritual qualities of such men as Patrice Lumumba, Antoine Gizenga, Jamil Buhired and Martin Luther King, to name but a few, from the national and racial relations of modern imperialism, from national oppression and the struggle of

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 405.

the oppressed peoples for emancipation from imperialist bondage.

Nor can we ignore national psychology and national feelings when dealing with the formation of the individual in socialist society. These factors must be taken into account as an important condition for educating people in a spirit of genuine internationalism.

*Ideological relations and ideological struggle* are likewise of tremendous importance. Underestimating this factor leads to a vulgar-sociological view of the matter and failure to understand the contradictory nature of the spiritual, including moral, processes characteristic of bourgeois society and also failure to reckon with the contradictions and difficulties involved in the formation of the communist individual.

We have dwelt on a few of the various factors comprised in the concept of "the totality of the social relations" in order to stress once more that the Marxist-Leninist view of the formation of the individual, his character, spiritual qualities, scale of values, aims and ideals, does not involve the absolutisation of material production relations ascribed to it by ideological opponents. It requires study of the role of all social relations, of the influence of the micro-environment and family, and personal characteristics.

Marx did not conceive of man's social nature as something static and immutable, but as active and developing historically, renewed and self-conditioned, ultimately, by the nature and features of developing concrete-historical social relations in all their variety. This is the idea which is expressed as a philosophical generalisation in Marx's thesis that man's essence is the totality of the social relations.

The question of the role of man's concrete activity, as we have already noted, has been widely debated in recent years by philosophers in socialist and capitalist countries, both Marxist and non-Marxist. Profound scientific and critical analysis of this question undoubtedly serves to enrich the philosophical concept of man and the theory of humanism at the present stage of the development of Marxist philosophy. But on no account must emphasis of the importance of the subject's activity lead to ignore the role of social relations, to reduce everything to the process of activity. The subject's activity, the role of practice, may

be treated from an idealist as well as a materialist standpoint.

Prior to Marx it was the idealists, primarily Fichte and Hegel, and not the materialists who wrote of the active aspect of man's relationship to the world. Contemporary bourgeois sociologists such as T. Parsons, R. Dahrendorf and G. Homans still have recourse to the concept of "social activity", and Jean-Paul Sartre devotes a great deal of attention to the activity of the subject.

Dialectical materialism, unlike idealism, regards social relations as the objectified activity of man, or whole generations of men, and is based on the view that man as an individual is determined by definite concrete-historical relations, by the conditions in which he lives and acts.

The Marxist-Leninist view of the matter under discussion differs fundamentally from the idealist view including Sartre's subjective interpretation. It is based on the dialectical materialist solution of the ontological problem, recognition of the primacy of the objective world, of social relations.

Although social relations are the relations of human activity and struggle and their outcome and the question of their primacy is restricted to the limits of the basic epistemological question, recognition of their primacy is the methodological point of departure in understanding the dialectic of subject and object, essence and activity, freedom and moral responsibility, and various other questions comprised in the philosophical concept of man. To reduce the question of the essence of man to the free creative activity of the subject and ignore the epistemological aspect of subjective-objective relations is to renounce the dialectical-materialist view of man and humanism altogether. For this approach leads straight to idealism and subjectivism. It was his recognition of the fact that man's essence is conditioned by the totality of all developing concrete-historical social relations that enabled Marx to free himself from idealist anthropological views and consider the problem of man in terms of objective, historically-conditioned tendencies of social development.

Thus, the scientific Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the essence of man goes beyond mere elucidation of the formative role of society with respect to the individual and



demonstrating the determinant role of social relations in his development. The important thing to remember is that the subject's activity is in fact determined by existing, developing social relations. Hence the well-known Marxist thesis that "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past".<sup>1</sup>

In other words, Marx and Engels regarded the relationship between subject and object, and hence the essence of man, not as something metaphysical but only in terms of the subject's activity, as relations based on the practical activity not of individuals but of the masses.

"Marxist humanism," S. L. Rubinstein writes, "raises the question of man's active relationship to reality, the possibility of his changing existing conditions, stressing his active rather than his passive principle. Man's relationship to the world can be presented through an objective description of the way man exists in the world as a thinking and acting being...capable of approaching the world and other people as they really are and thus all the more capable, according to his essence, of changing and transforming it by action. Hence the responsibility for all that he has done or failed to do as a human force."<sup>2</sup>

Various anthropological views of the essence of man contend with the Marxist-Leninist theory outlined above. They include the related views of Freud and Sartre, who reject the determination of man's activity by any constant external factor and hence the determinant role of objective social relations, and deny the connection between man's essence and such relations. In *L'être et le néant* Sartre rejects this "linear determinism", as he calls it, in favour of Freud's "vertical determinism", which focusses its attention on the inner world of man and regards every human action as a manifestation of deeper internal factors. "Nobody has made a systematic attempt to reveal the implications of an action," he writes. "Only one school has set out

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Moscow, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 398.

<sup>2</sup> S. L. Rubinstein, "Man and the World", *Problems of Philosophy*, No. 8, 1969, p. 138 (in Russian).

from the same original evidence as we and that is the Freudian school. For Freud, as for us, an action cannot be limited to itself but refers directly to deeper structures. And psychoanalysis is a method by which it is possible to clarify these structures.... Existentialist psychoanalysis knows nothing *prior* to the original emergence of human freedom; empirical psychoanalysis (Freudian—M.P.) asserts that the individual's primary affectivity is a virgin wax prior to its history. The libido outside its concrete fixations is nothing but a permanent possibility of self-fixation no matter how or on what."<sup>1</sup>

There is no denying that the desire to gain a deeper knowledge of man, of the inner world of the individual, and the urge to disclose the root causes conditioning his activity, his actions and behaviour, are extremely valuable. But, predictably, in the system of Freudian and existentialist psychoanalysis they remain abstract wishes.

Rejecting the Marxist concept of the essence of man, Sartre, following in the wake of Freud, limits his investigations to the autonomous inner world of the individual, his inner "selfhood", his *natura naturans*.

It is universally recognised that the Freudian approach to this particular matter had a positive influence in helping to overcome various naturalist theories in psychology. But if the basic tenets of Freudian psychoanalysis are treated as general philosophical and methodological principles in the study of the essence of man, they inevitably lead into the sphere of the irrational.

While Freud regarded unconscious drives, libido energy, as the point of departure for investigation of human nature, for Sartre it is the urge for freedom that is decisive. He is thus largely concerned with such ethical questions as "free choice", "creative plan" and "purposeful activity of the individual", questions which, like the whole problem of man as we shall see below, could not find a scientific solution in his philosophical system since he considers them essentially as extraneous to social relations and confined to the limited field of the subject's inner world, individual experience. As T. A. Kuzmina writes in her analysis of Freud and Sartre's views on the individual: "Out of these

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'être et le néant*, Paris, 1943, pp. 535, 657.

experiences and all the phenomena which man comes across in his inner, subjective world, the philosopher goes on to construct an ontological picture of the world as a whole. Thus, the historically naturalist line in philosophy is transformed into phenomenologism. Phenomenological anthropology attempts to determine the different parameters of this selfhood, subjectivity, purely human and so on, seeing in this the key to understanding the human world."<sup>1</sup>

Continuing this idea, we might add that not only does this key fail to be of any assistance in understanding the problem but it actually works the other way, preventing its scientific solution. The following appraisal of existentialism by the West German philosopher Schneider is very much to the point here. "Existentialism," he writes, "isolates man and confines him to his own 'world'. It is doubtful whether this man deprived of essence and apparently appealing to himself is the real, historical man. Existentialist philosophers appeal to an aimless activity, hostile to history, which underestimates the fundamental importance of nature and society."<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \*

There are other aspects of the question of the essence of man, among them *the relationship between the social and the biological, hence man's essence and activity as an individual representative of the species and an individual personality, permitting fuller and more comprehensive presentation of the social nature of man.*

We have already noted how Marx gave his definition of the essence of man while criticising the unscientific biologising approach to the question. However, this does not mean that Marx and contemporary Marxism reject or underestimate the unity of *the biological and the social in man*. In determining what is most essential in a man as a representative of the species, Marx viewed him as a *biosocial phenomenon* in the genealogical development of live Nature. In

<sup>1</sup> T. A. Kuzmina, "Human Existence and the Individual in Freud and Sartre" in *The Problem of Man in Modern Philosophy*, Moscow, 1969, p. 274 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> See J. Rehmke, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, Bonn, 1959, S. 367.

the Marxist interpretation of the concepts of "man", "individual" and "person" their main distinction lies in the correlation between the social and the biological.<sup>1</sup>

"Man" expresses the unity of the biosocial, and "individual" is mainly biological, while the concept "person", although linked to the biological since every person is a man and an individual, is predominantly social and refers to the aspect in which a man appears in the system of social relations as the subject of social action and historical progress.

In Marxist writings, Soviet included, there exist many different definitions of "individual" in the sense of "person". The most satisfactory would seem to be that it is *an historically concrete man, the totality of his socio-psychological and moral qualities, formed and expressed in social activity, in definite concrete social relations and connections.*

This idea was expressed by Marx when he wrote: "The essence of the 'individual person' lies not in his beard, not in his blood, not in his abstract physical nature but in his social quality."<sup>2</sup>

Marx and Engels later expressed this idea as follows in *The German Ideology*. "The difference between the individual as a person and what is accidental to him is not a conceptual difference but a historical fact. This distinction has a different significance at different times. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

Accepting that the person acts within a certain system of social relations conditioning his nature and typical social features, some writers regard the person as the individual existence of social relations.<sup>4</sup>

I. Kon defines the person, on the one hand, as a concrete individual, the subject of activity, an entity combining

<sup>1</sup> This question has been specially analysed in a number of works by Soviet philosophers, including V. P. Tugarinov and L. P. Buyeva, and the collective works *The Individual under Socialism*, Moscow, 1968, and *Leninism and the Philosophical Problems of Modern Times*, Moscow, 1970.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, 1969, Bd. 1, S. 222.

<sup>3</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1968, p. 89.

<sup>4</sup> See P. Y. Kryazhev, "Formation of the Individual as a Social Process", in *The Individual under Socialism*, Moscow, 1966, and L. V. Sokhan, *Communism and the Spiritual Progress of the Individual*, Kiev, 1966 (in Russian).



individual features and social roles, and, on the other, as "...a social feature, as the sum of the socially significant features integrated in him, which are formed in the process of direct and indirect interaction between the given person and other people and make him, in his turn, the subject of labour, cognition and intercourse".<sup>1</sup> L. P. Buyeva and others point out that a man is not a person in all his many-sided essence or in all his connections and emphasise the factor of social activity.

Various other definitions of the concept of "individual" in the sense of "person" are to be found in Soviet philosophical, sociological and psychological literature, yet despite the differences, they are practically all based on the same methodological principles—the unity of the internal/subjective and the external/objective. While recognising the biologically conditioned qualities of the person, Soviet philosophy and psychology examines it in close unity with the socially conditioned qualities that are most essential to the person as a whole and rejects both unwarranted biologising and vulgar sociologising of the concept. Proceeding from the principle that "the person is always manifested and formed in action, and only in action", S. L. Rubinstein gives the following definition: "In explaining any psychological phenomena, the person is an integrated totality of internal conditions through which all external influences are refracted."<sup>2</sup>

As the subject of activity, historical progress, a person appears in the unity of his individual features and—as the sociologists would say—social roles. Although the concept "person" is associated with general socially-typical features, unlike the concept "man" it refers to the concrete live individual, while not being identical with the concept "individual". It is therefore impossible to agree with those philosophers, sociologists and, especially, psychologists who fail to distinguish between the essence of the person and the essence of the individual. Marx had the following to say in analysing the relationship between two individuals. "Both experience the need to breathe; for both of them air

exists as atmosphere; none of this, however, establishes any social contact between them; as breathing individuals they are related to each other only as natural bodies, and not as persons."<sup>1</sup>

While in the case of "person" the social factor is the determinant one, the individual as a representative of the species is distinguished by his uniqueness which depends above all on his biological and psychological characteristics, individual traits that cannot be reduced to those of any other equally unique individual.

At the same time, as the German Marxist R. Miller has rightly pointed out, it is not a case of making a complete contrast between the uniqueness and exclusiveness on the one hand and general features and qualities on the other, since, strictly speaking, there is not such uniqueness or exclusiveness. Miller holds that since all the features characterising the individual are present to a greater or lesser degree and in some form or other in many people, individuality indicates rather a special combination of common features and the degree to which they are manifest and developed in each man.<sup>2</sup>

So far we have been talking about the philosophical and sociological content of the concepts "man", "individual" and "person". In real life they are inseparably fused, the relationship between them being expressed by the *dialectic of the general, the particular and the unique*, composing, in combination, the *concrete* man, individual and person. Lenin, in his article "On the Question of Dialectics" wrote that the particular only exists in relation to the general, the general only exists in the particular, through the particular, and every "particular" is at the same time general.

In real life, the concept "man" is organically united with "person" and "individual", which are components of it. As Marx wrote, "Man, much as he may, therefore, be a *particular* individual (and it is precisely his particularity which makes him an individual, and a real *individual* social being) is just as much the *totality*."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. S. Kon, *Sociology of the Individual*, Moscow, 1967, p. 7 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> S. L. Rubinstein, *Principles and Paths of Development of Psychology*, Moscow, 1959 (in Russian).

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, (Rohentwurf) 1857-1858, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1953, S. 154.

<sup>2</sup> R. Miller, *Persönlichkeit und Gemeinschaft*, Berlin, 1961.

<sup>3</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1967, p. 98.

The concepts of "man", "individual" and "person", as we have already noted, differ only as regards the determinant correlation of features of biological and social factors, the latter being especially present in the case of "person". There is thus much to be said for the approach adopted by V. P. Tugarinov, who writes that these concepts are identical in their extent of application. All people, irrespective of race, sex or nationality, are persons. But the three concepts differ in content in at least three important respects: (a) man is an entity, whereas a person is a part, a component of man; (b) man is always a biosocial concept, while person is the social aspect of man, the sum of the features of man that are produced in him in the process of social development; (c) man is the material carrier of personality, and personality expresses the sum of the social features of man.

Naturally, "person" reflects not only the social but also the biological nature of man to some extent. But it is distinctive in that its formation and development are determined by social conditions and above all social existence. The content of "individual" is fairly simple: "individual" means "particular man". The individual is the particular case of a property of nature as a whole, the property of discreteness, separateness.<sup>1</sup> The individual comprises the biological and the social.

In non-Marxist and anti-Marxist writings we constantly find the view advanced that Marxism totally ignores the importance of the psychological factor in personal development. Thus, Erich Fromm attempts to compensate for this serious "omission" with the aid of the instruments of psychoanalysis, attaching special importance to the theory of "social character".

There is no denying that a closer link with psychology is also needed in the Marxist theory of man, that the psychological aspect of the question is going to require serious study and that there are still many unsolved questions on the borderline between philosophy, physiology, biology, psychology and other sciences which need to be investigated in conjunction. As Tugarinov writes: "It is indisputable that

everything in which man differs from the animals is acquired from society, from social development. But it does not follow that the biological in man disappears entirely. The biological principle is simply 'removed', i.e., preserved in a changed form. But whatever happens the biological principle remains the biological principle, always present in man and inevitably leaving its mark on the very foundations of the social structure."<sup>1</sup> Further studies in the field of social psychology are also going to be of tremendous importance. Development and penetration in depth are characteristic of any field of science, and the Marxist science of man is no exception. However, in our opinion Fromm's theoretical conclusions are quite untenable. Unlike Freud, Fromm bases his theories on the idea that it is the need for "assimilation" (of things) and "socialisation" (of people) rather than the libido that determines man as a social being, and thus that man is characterised by his sensual longings for objects—people and nature—and his need to establish *rapproches* with the world.<sup>2</sup> He does make the reservation, however, that the forms of "assimilation" and "socialisation", expressing man's chief longing, depend on the social system in which he lives.

It is certainly true that the forms of spiritual life are to some extent connected with man's biological nature—sensual perception, the activity of receptors and analysers and sensual desires. However, in his "dynamic psychological theory", Fromm *absolutises the factor of consumption*, treating it as the basic factor, and that abstractly, as the universal feature of our age, despite the fact that he resorts to the concept of "middle class". He notes a difference in the social character of the twentieth century as compared to the nineteenth century. The social character of the middle class in the last century might be called an "accumulating orientation", characterised by a desire to acquire property and wealth. In the twentieth century it is what he calls "*Homo consumens*". He goes on to affirm that there is a social character common to capitalism and socialism, which is becoming more and more widespread in

<sup>1</sup> V. P. Tugarinov, "Dialectic of the Social and Biological", *The Individual under Socialism*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>1</sup> V. P. Tugarinov, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> See: Erich Fromm, "The Application of Humanist Psychoanalysis to Marx's Theory", *Socialist Humanism*, New York, 1966, p. 233.



the highly-developed industrial countries. The urge to consume, he concludes, is the dominant psychic process in modern industrial society.

"*Homo consumens* is the man whose main goal is not primarily to *own* things, but to *consume* more and more, and thus to compensate for his inner vacuity, passivity, loneliness, and anxiety.... A man...who wants to consume more and more, and for whom everything becomes an article of consumption: cigarettes, liquor, sex, movies, television, travel, and even education, books, and lectures.... *Homo consumens* is under the illusion of happiness, while unconsciously he suffers from his boredom and passivity. The more power he has over machines the more powerless he becomes as a human being; the more he consumes the more he becomes a slave to the ever-increasing needs which the industrial system creates and manipulates."<sup>1</sup>

Rightly criticising Freud for his metaphysicism, Fromm himself also subscribes to it, with the difference that while Freud absolutised the libido he has made an absolute of consumption. Although Fromm speaks of social stratification and the social character of the middle-class man, and although he gives a vivid description of modern bourgeois society, his conclusion that the urge to consume is the dominant factor in the psychic process (which, as he sees it, is the same under capitalism and socialism) is quite untenable since he ignores the social contrasts and polarisation to be found in even the most developed capitalist country. His assessment of man's social character in the socialist countries, including the USSR, can only cause raised eyebrows since it lacks the most elementary scientific grounds and completely ignores the findings of sociological surveys carried out in the USSR in various fields and at various levels.

Important though the psychological factor, sensual urges and personal demands may be, they can hardly be said to be the only essential features of social character. In Fromm's analysis everything is finally reduced to the need to "assimilate" things, the sensual desire for objects, regarded, moreover, abstractly, independent of social system, social relations and connections, the nature of the spiritual

<sup>1</sup> E. Fromm, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

development of a given society, and numerous other factors.

Fromm's theory of "social character" is conditioned to a certain extent by his view of the essence of man. Fromm holds that "man's essence lies in the very contradiction between his being *in* nature, thrown into the world without his will, and taken away against his will, at an accidental place and time, and at the same time in *transcending* nature by his lack of instinctual equipment and by the fact of his awareness—of himself, of others, of the past and the present."<sup>1</sup> Somewhat further on he gives a general formula: "Man has no innate 'drive for progress', but he is driven by the need to solve his existential contradiction, which arises again at every new level of development. This contradiction—or, in other words, man's different and contradictory possibilities—constitutes his essence."<sup>2</sup>

Here Fromm is really speaking not of the essence of man but rather of the relationship between man's existence and demands, a question which Marx examined extensively from the standpoint of dialectical materialism. Unlike Marx, who analysed the matter in various aspects, Fromm treats it purely in its psychological aspect.

The psychological problems over which Fromm labours have been investigated for a long time in Soviet psychology,<sup>3</sup> where although the importance of sense perception is also taken into account, the formation of personal awareness is regarded as mediated by intercourse with other people, social relations, "indirect" social experience accumulated in various forms of social awareness (science, the arts, etc.), the socio-historical practice of mankind, which is transmitted to the individual and influences him both emotionally and rationally.

Soviet philosophy and psychology also recognise the tremendous organising *role of social awareness*, its importance in forming the *individual's primary orientation*, as well as the problem of demands.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example: *The Science of Psychology in the USSR*, Vols. I, II, Novosti Press Agency, 1960; B. G. Ananyev, *Man as the Subject of Cognition*, Leningrad, 1968 (in Russian). Other publications may be found in the Bibliography.

The problem of *orientation, conditioning*, which is being studied in D. N. Uznadze and N. L. Eliava's school and in L. I. Bozhovich's laboratory occupies a most important place in philosophical-psychological and sociological study of the question of the individual person. It is studied as an internal factor mediating or refracting all external influences on the personality. It is a "complete, dynamic state of the subject, a state of readiness for a certain activity, a state conditioned by two factors: the subject's demands and the corresponding objective situation".<sup>1</sup> Orientation is thus a component of the structure of the person's inner world.<sup>2</sup> In its sociological aspect it is related to the content of awareness, a person's ideological orientation, the "orientations of life and values", as Leningrad sociologists A. Zdravomyslov and V. Yadov put it. They define it as a component of the personality structure around which a person's thoughts and feelings revolve and according to which many everyday decisions are taken.<sup>3</sup>

L. P. Buyeva describes it as "a predisposition for regarding social phenomena in a certain way, from certain social standpoints, a desire to achieve certain ideas and ideals, orientation towards particular values".<sup>4</sup>

I. S. Kon has written about conditioning in relation to self-awareness, and L. V. Sokhan and many others have examined it in the sphere of its role in the formation of the personality in socialist society.<sup>5</sup>

On the philosophical battlefield, the Marxist-Leninist teaching of the essence of man is also forced to wage a constant struggle against various objective-idealist, theological and positivist views.

The idealist views of the essence of man propounded, for example, by the neo-positivists and the pragmatists, are based on divorcing man from real social relations and class

<sup>1</sup> *The Science of Psychology in the USSR*, Vol. II, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> We leave aside here the role of orientation in its epistemological and other aspects.

<sup>3</sup> A. G. Zdravomyslov and V. A. Yadov, "Attitude to Work and Value Orientations of the Individual", *Sociology in the USSR*, Moscow, 1965, Vol. I, p. 199 (in Russian).

<sup>4</sup> L. P. Buyeva, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

<sup>5</sup> I. S. Kon, *Sociology of the Individual*, p. 55; L. V. Sokhan, *Communism and the Spiritual Progress of the Individual*, Kiev, 1966 (all in Russian).

and making him a mechanical unit of an abstract, extra-historical "association" or "group". The statements of Professor S. Pepper of the University of California, a leading modern pragmatist, are typical in this respect. "A personality is a set of dispositions," he writes. "In the broadest sense, a personality consists in the total set of behaviour capacities of a particular organism. . . .

"When we refer to a man's personality . . . we generally mean his particular set of interests, and these are precisely his aesthetic tastes, his hobbies and enthusiasms, his beliefs, his desires and ambitions, his aversions and fears, and his habits of serving these."<sup>1</sup>

The reduction of man's essence to the sum of particular feelings, desires and emotions, "behavioural capacities" and so on, that is to say, the complete neglect of his social nature, is typical of many bourgeois sociologists today.

The question of the essence of man is not a question of abstract theory, but is related to the nature of social relations. It is because the scientific Marxist theory of man leads to disturbing conclusions for capitalism that bourgeois ideologists are all the time defending numerous theological, idealist and metaphysical conceptions which do not differ fundamentally from those that were refuted in Marx's and Engels' time.

Numerous books have been published abroad defending neo-Thomist, Christian-existentialist, personalist and other theories of the essence of man. Despite differences in form, they all defend a common idea—that the person is an invariable value of transcendental origin. Thus, Jacques Maritain, an ardent champion of the religious mystical theories of neo-Thomism, writes: "To our question: What is man?, we can respond with the Greek, Jewish and Christian idea of man: man is an animal endowed with reason whose supreme dignity lies in the ability to think; man is a free individual in personal relationship to God, whose supreme justice or uprightness is voluntary obedience to God's law; man is a sinful and offended creature aspiring to a divine life and the freedom of grace, and his perfection consists in love."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. Pepper, *The Sources of Value*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1958, p. 459.

<sup>2</sup> J. Maritain, *Pour une philosophie de l'éducation*, Paris, 1959, p. 24.



The same mystical concept of man and the person as an abstract, spiritual being is preached by the Christian existentialists and the personalists. The basic principles of the personalist "creed", both Christian and atheist, is expressed in the formula: "The essence of the person is spirituality".<sup>1</sup>

The contradiction between the Marxist-Leninist view of the essence of man and religious-idealist, abstract-ethical, psychological and other idealist theories was clearly in evidence in the papers presented by bourgeois philosophers at the Thirteenth International Philosophy Congress in Mexico in September 1963. The Spanish philosopher Adolfo Muñoz-Alonso said: "Man is determined not by the fact of his existence, but by the fact that he is directed towards God, the state of *Capax Dei*. This is an ontological trend far superior to psychological or ethical longings."<sup>2</sup> The statements made in this and other similar papers read at the Congress, such as G. Marcel's "The Existentialist Aspect of Human Dignity", were directed against Marxist theory which was represented there by the Soviet philosophers P. N. Fyodosyev, M. B. Mitin, F. V. Konstantinov, T. I. Oizerman, and others.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time these statements were directed against atheist existentialism, in particular Sartre's treatment of the problem of essence and existence, and against abstract-ethical and psychological theories which lacked due respect for God. In contrast to Muñoz-Alonso Professor Miguel Angel Virasoro of Argentina defended the anthropological view, maintaining that self-development is inherent in man, stressing that the process of self-development, representing the very essence of man, is manifested in phenomenological intuition.

Professor Virasoro called his paper "A New Conception of Man".<sup>4</sup> Many Western philosophers, especially in recent years, have come out with such theories purporting to be new. After all, there is nothing like novelty to attract attention. In fact, however, there was nothing very new about Professor Virasoro's conception, which defended the old

anthropological view of man as isolated and independent of existing social relations.

The claim that the human individual is a self-developing process manifested in phenomenological intuition is at best the old idealist view of man clad in new garb. The same applies to the other "new" theories advanced by bourgeois philosophers, the only difference between them being that some exalt phenomenological intuition, others individual psychology, others man's moral world, others the urge for freedom, the aspiration towards God, and so on. It is just because all these views of the essence of man are based on old idealist or religious-idealist principles that their authors try to present them with the attractive label of "new conceptions".

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Another aspect of the question of the essence of man is the relationship between *essence and activity, the real possibility of man's development as a person and individual*, the complete, all-round manifestation and development of his essential powers as a biosocial being and representative of the human race. In this humanist sense, the philosophical conception of the essence of man is the methodological basis of any particular treatment of the question of the formation and development of man as a person and an individual, and is organically combined with general sociological analysis in terms of the relationship between the individual person and society.

It is in this dialectic of the essence and activity that the philosophical (ontological and epistemological) and sociopolitical aspects of the problem, and hence the moral, represent single entity.

This problem has frequently been examined in philosophy and social science in the past, though not always in coherent philosophical terms. It was mentioned by Goethe, for example, who said that man bore within him not only his own individuality but the whole of mankind with all its possibilities, although he could realise these possibilities to a small extent in view of the external limitations of his individual existence.

Since the last war the question of essence and activity has been vigorously debated by the existentialists, so much

<sup>1</sup> Ivan Gobry, *La personne*, Paris, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Memorias del XIII Congreso Internacional de Filosofía*, Mexico, 1963, Vol. 1, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> See *Man and the Modern Age*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1964.

<sup>4</sup> See *Memorias del XIII Congreso Internacional de Filosofía*, 1963.

so that many philosophers declare it to be the exclusive preserve of existentialism.

In fact, however, the problem was examined and extensively elucidated by Marx quite early on, though naturally he treated it quite differently from the way the existentialists have since done. Thus, in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx analysed it in the economic, social and spiritual, in particular moral, aspects, in terms of the alienated social relations produced by private property. Later on, in mature Marxist works, the dialectic of essence and existence, the activity of man as a person and individual, became a basic methodological principle of research into the problem of alienation in capitalist society and the problem of humanism.

Suffice it to recall Marx's brilliant idea that alienated labour leads to a divorce between man's essence and existence, where man transforms his activity, his essence into a mere means of sustaining his existence.

We already know how in *Capital* and other works Marx expounded and brilliantly substantiated the thesis that capitalism deprives man of the conditions for revealing and developing his social nature, human essence, activity and personal inclinations and gifts, and makes his life-activity a mere means to his existence, thereby devaluing a person and crippling him spiritually.

That is why Marx held that the only real solution to the contradiction between man and nature and man and man, and the only solution to the conflict between his essence and existence must necessarily involve the abolition of capitalist society and the establishment of communism.

Existentialism, unlike Marxism, treats the problem of essence and existence from a subjective-idealist standpoint. Sartre, for example, advanced the well-known thesis that existence precedes essence. "You are nothing else than your life ... a man is nothing else than a series of undertakings ... he is the sum, the organisation, the ensemble of the relationships which make up these undertakings."<sup>1</sup>

Sartre was appealing to "real man", to man's real-life conditions, to his existence, which under modern capitalism

are cruelly opposed to him, throwing him into a state of loneliness and anxiety, anguish and fear. He was doubtless guided by the worthy aim of activising man and arousing a sense of responsibility in him when he wrote: "Only afterward will he be something, and he himself will have made what he will be. ... Not only is man what he conceives himself to be, but he is also only what he wills himself to be after this thrust toward existence. Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself."<sup>1</sup>

These words express a kind of concern for man and his future in the years of the fascist nightmare, the tragedy experienced by millions. This surely explains why in the immediate post-war years existentialism came to take such a hold of a certain group of intellectuals, who sought in it the answer to the vital problem of man with which they were so concerned. But the answer proved to be an illusion, and its theoretical basis, although ostensibly humanist with its stress on "live", "real" man and his importance, position and feelings, was unscientific.

In the existentialist system "real man" became an abstract, irreal function, a kind of Robinson Crusoe, supposedly independent of society and social tendencies, independent of objective social relations.

For over twenty years Sartre has been criticising Marxist-Leninist theory of the essence of man and stubbornly preaching his own in opposition to it. In *L'existentialisme est un humanisme*, published in 1946, he claimed that all materialists identify all men, including themselves, with objects of the material world, regarding man as a complex of particular reactions no different from the complex of qualities and things constituting, for example, a table, a chair or a stone. Having thus distorted the dialectical-materialist view, he goes on to declare: "We want the world of man to be an ensemble of values different from the material world. ... There is no universe apart from the universe of man, the world of human subjectivity."<sup>2</sup>

Sartre's arguments are not new. Marxism has continually been presented by its opponents as vulgar utilitarianism

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism and Human Emotions*, New York, 1957, p. 33.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'existentialisme est un humanisme*, Paris, 1946, pp. 65, 93.



ignoring the spiritual and moral world of man. In point of fact, it is not that Marxism treats man entirely in the economic and social aspect, but simply that in the Marxist definition of the essence of man as the totality of the social relations the emphasis is on the nature and role of the social conditions in which man lives and which influence his spiritual formation and development and shape human relations.

The existentialist dictum that existence precedes essence and determines it is an idealist thesis reflecting the subjective-idealist premises that underlie the existentialist philosophy. Sartre is really asserting the primacy of man's spiritual world and treating the subject as independent of existing social relations, thereby excluding general historically-conditioned tendencies in the formation of the essence of man and ignoring the complex, contradictory nature of the process of human spiritual, including moral, development. Sartre relates the formation of man's spiritual world to the empirical fact of individual moral awareness based on absolute "free will", regarding the formation of man's spiritual and moral world as a spontaneous process of inner self-perfection.

Sartre's views have naturally evolved somewhat over the years and in his more recent works he has even written about the crisis of effete bourgeois ideology and upheld Marxism as the summit of knowledge that cannot be surpassed. Yet at the same time he continues to oppose the Marxist conception of man and persists in counterposing existence and essence.

Sartre admits that Marxism has a theoretical basis, unlike American sociology with its vague notions and theories, or stagnant psychoanalysis. But he holds that it dissolves the individual in the idea, whereas existentialism supposedly affirms real man. However, these assertions are left hanging in the air. Sartre is continually contradicting himself, one moment declaring that Marxism is "the only philosophy capable of really penetrating man's essence in all its complexity", and the next announcing that Marxism "makes symbols and myths of living people".<sup>1</sup> Sartre repro-

aches Marxism for "casting into the realm of chance all the concrete circumstances of human life" and "retaining nothing of historical totalisation but its abstract skeleton of universality".<sup>1</sup> Confusing the Marxist theory of the essence of man with the vulgar sociological conception, Sartre asserts that the Marxists dispense with concrete man. Thus, he says that if he wants to understand the works of Valéry, a petty-bourgeois intellectual, there is no point in turning to the Marxists. "They will replace this numerically definable group with the *idea* of its material conditions, of its position among other groups... and of its internal contradictions. We shall be brought back to the economic category, and find that same petty-bourgeois private property threatened by capitalist concentration on the one hand and the demands of the masses on the other, to which, of course, the instability of the group's social position will be attributed. All this is perfectly correct: this skeleton of universality is truth *at the level of abstraction*; moreover, so long as the questions raised belong to the realm of the universal, these schematic elements, being combined, sometimes produce the answers."<sup>2</sup>

The suggestion that in studying the works of Valéry, or any other writer, it is necessary to take into account the concrete environment from which he came is perfectly correct. But it is not Sartre's idea: it derives from the very dialectical-materialist concept of the essence of man that he is disputing.

A classic example of Marxist analysis of a writer's works is Lenin's series of articles on Tolstoi, of which Sartre for some reason makes no mention. Take the following passage: "The contradictions in Tolstoi's works, views, doctrines, in his school, are indeed glaring. On the one hand, we have the great artist, the genius who has not only drawn incomparable pictures of Russian life but has made first-class contributions to world literature. On the other hand, we have the landlord obsessed with Christ. On the one hand, the remarkably powerful, forthright and sincere protest against social falsehood and hypocrisy; and on the other, the 'Tolstolian', i.e., the jaded, hysterical sniveller called

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique de la raison dialectique*, Paris, 1960, p. 110.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

the Russian intellectual. . . . Tolstoi is absurd as a prophet who has discovered new nostrums for the salvation of mankind. . . . Tolstoi is great as the spokesman of the ideas and sentiments that emerged among the millions of Russian peasants at the time the bourgeois revolution was approaching in Russia. Tolstoi is original, because the sum total of his views, taken as a whole, happens to express the specific features of our revolution as a *peasant* bourgeois revolution. From this point of view, the contradictions in Tolstoi's views are indeed a mirror of those contradictory conditions in which the peasantry had to play their historical part in our revolution."<sup>1</sup>

The above analysis can hardly be accused of "casting into the realm of chance all the concrete circumstances of human life" or of "retaining nothing of historical totalisation but its abstract skeleton of universality".

Lenin's analysis clearly expresses the unity of the general, the particular and the unique, presenting Tolstoi as a perfectly concrete, rich and many-sided figure, organically related to his environment, his age and existing social relations.

Lenin also wrote: "The contradictions in Tolstoi's views are not *contradictions inherent in his personal views alone*, but are a reflection of the extremely complex, contradictory conditions, *social influences* and historical traditions which determined the *psychology of the various classes* and various sections of Russian society in the *post-Reform*, but *pre-revolutionary* era."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, Tolstoi's views were influenced by an ensemble of factors: contradictory social conditions, social influences, historical traditions, the psychologies of various classes, and also the contradictions in the *writer's own thinking*, his individual peculiarities.

Speaking of the Tolstoian doctrine, Lenin points out the influence that the traditions, habits and beliefs of the masses had on the asceticism, non-violence, appeal to "spirit" and so on that Tolstoi preached. Although Lenin held that Tolstoi's teaching was not to be regarded as something individual, as a deliberate pursuit of originality or personal

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 205-06 (emphasis added—M.P.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 16, p. 325.

caprice, he made a point of drawing attention to the contradictions inherent in his personal views.

Such is the dialectic of the Marxist-Leninist concept of the essence of man, and it is quite pointless to insist that Marxism needs to be supplemented with existentialism, anthropology or with psychoanalysis, which Sartre himself admits to have stagnated.

## 2. Man's Purpose

The question of man's *purpose*, the *meaning* of his life, is inextricably bound up with the problem of the essence of man.

Once again we find two basic philosophical trends conflicting—materialism and various forms of idealism and religion, dialectics and metaphysics, the historical approach and unhistorical unification and absolutisation of phenomena.

The works of many Western philosophers and sociologists dealing with this subject abound in concepts of abstract virtue, appeals to serve the "truth", affirmation of "the beautiful", and so on. But it all depends on what content is ascribed to these concepts. More often than not bourgeois sociologists and moralists identify with the concepts of "virtue" and "truth" actions that would help to preserve the capitalist system, although this is often implicit rather than explicit and may be accompanied by various reservations, modifications and wishes. The capitalist system is declared to be the highest stage of social progress and presented as a noble and moral ideal. Thus, the real content of the terms "virtue", "truth" and "beauty" in the deliberations of bourgeois apologists on the meaning of human life and man's purpose is progress within the framework of the bourgeois system. Many of them reject high ideals from the standpoint of contemporary positivism, associating man's purpose with accessible goals. Thus, Hans Leisegang dismisses the Marxist view of man's purpose as struggle for the happiness of all peoples, and writes: "Since there is no such thing as general happiness for all the concept of happiness cannot be made to serve as a goal towards which many or



all people should strive together."<sup>1</sup> The conclusion to be drawn from this is that only personal well-being is real while the common weal is pure illusion.

Other sociologists, while accepting the idea of the achievement of general happiness, imbue the concept of happiness with a content that makes it possible to pronounce capitalism the only society capable of ensuring it.

Then there is the *vulgar hedonist* view that man is only born for pleasure, and that since enjoyment is the sole purpose of his existence, man should strive to derive as much personal pleasure as possible from life.

Recent years have seen the propagation of *neo-Freudian theories* according to which man's purpose in life is the free and unrestricted satisfaction of his needs and instincts in sexual pleasure. These ideas, which reduce man to the level of the beasts and thereby contradict the very meaning of *human* existence and *man's* purpose, are widespread not only in philosophy but in the decadent literature and art of the contemporary bourgeois world.

The neo-Freudian interpretation of man's purpose and human happiness in the works of Western bourgeois writers automatically calls to mind Gorky's penetrating observation about the degradation of the individualist hero, descending from Chateaubriand's René and Goethe's Werther to the two-legged swine presented by Artsybashev in his novel *Sanin*, from Stendahl's Julien Sorel and Bourget's Greslou to Maupassant's *Bel ami*.

The individualist, highly egoistic approach to the question of man's purpose in some form or other is common to many currents of contemporary idealist philosophy.

The failure of contemporary bourgeois ideology to provide a correct solution to the question is partly due to the *social pessimism* that characterises it.

Time was when bourgeois sociology in the person of Condorcet, Comte and others defended the idea of historical progress and was imbued with social optimism. Today, when history is developing to the disadvantage of the bourgeoisie, bourgeois ideologists, despite their attempts to refute the objective laws of social development, cannot escape the thought that capitalism is historically doomed. They

interpret the threat to capitalist society as a threat to human civilisation as a whole. This can be seen from the gloomy, apocalyptic ideas expressed in many works by bourgeois philosophers, sociologists, moralists, writers, theologians, etc., which abound in such pessimistic predictions as "The hand on the clock of the worlds moves ceaselessly forward towards the stroke of twelve", "We are on the threshold of the Apocalypse", and "We are living today under the sign of the collapse of civilisation".<sup>1</sup>

Social pessimism is engendered not only by antagonistic class contradictions but also by fear of nuclear war. This helps explain the wide currency in the bourgeois world of the idea of the futility of human existence and the absence of universally valid noble aims and goals. After all, they say, man is born for suffering and death, and mankind is advancing inexorably towards destruction. This social pessimism, a sense of futility and lack of purpose, is especially evident in the existentialism of Heidegger, Jaspers and others.

According to Heidegger, death expresses the essential forces of man's being, and life is "existence for death". To the existentialist idea of solitude and abandonment is added the assertion that man is bound to be continually in the grip of anguish and fear, suffering and horror of destruction. Moreover, these existentialists insist, whereas it is possible to avoid ordinary sufferings by getting used to them, it is impossible to get rid of that universal suffering, "existential suffering", which man cannot escape however hard he may try to ignore it or struggle against it. Jaspers holds that such suffering is inevitable as a condition of man's purification and communion with God. Kierkegaard, referring to his own sorrow as an Englishman refers to his home, wrote: "My sorrow is my castle, and life is a bitter drink that must be sipped slowly, drop by drop".

This is the traditional religious view of earthly life, wherein man's purpose is preparation for the "afterlife". This reactionary, anti-humanitarian view is championed by many contemporary idealist schools, and above all by the neo-Thomists. Maritain's "integral humanism" is essentially the idea that there are two inherent principles in man, the

<sup>1</sup> H. Leisegang, *Zur Ethik des Abendlandes*, Berlin, 1949, S. 9.

<sup>1</sup> *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, 1954, Vol. 1, No. 3, Paris, p. 624.

physical, which is transient and base and the spiritual, involving belief in God and communion with Him. Accordingly, man's purpose and aim in life is overcoming everything that is connected with the earthly and transient, and moral self-perfection in accordance with eternal, divinely inspired moral principles as preparation for the afterlife.

Religious-idealist, mystical ideas are preached by the personalists such as Flewelling, who writes: "The true personalist comes to the highest self-expression but reaches it through self-forgetfulness in the service of God and the common good."<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, Hocking maintains that the meaning of life is to reach the sphere where the discovery of values is never ceased. This sphere in philosophy is mysticism.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly such views distort the whole essence of the matter, substituting metaphysical and fideist beliefs for a real picture of things as they are. Idealism, with its fine-sounding but empty and lifeless effusions is unable to provide a scientific explanation of man's mission on earth and the practical means of achieving it.

The anti-Marxists falsely accuse Marxism of totally ignoring the problem of mortality. But the point is that Marxism refuses to absolutise death and only considers it in association with life. As Marx aptly put it: "Death seems to be a harsh victory of the species over the *determinate* individual and to contradict their unity. But the *determinate* individual is only a *determinate species being*, and as such mortal."<sup>3</sup>

It is necessary, however, to draw a distinction between the death of the individual and the death of man as a person. Physical death does not signify the death of the person. In saying this, we are naturally not subscribing to religious beliefs about an "afterlife", for which life on earth is but a bitter preparation. The person as a creator of material and spiritual values dies physically, as an individual, but lives on in his works, in people's memory and minds. The enduring memory of people who were great and impor-

<sup>1</sup> R. Flewelling, *The Survival of Western Culture*, New York, 1943, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> See W. Hocking, *Types of Philosophy*, p. 314.

<sup>3</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, 1967, p. 98.

tant in life is sufficient proof of this. This being so, the meaning of life lies not in preparation for death, in its religious or existentialist sense, but in the fullest expression of man's creative essence.

As Professor Pantskhava of Moscow University so rightly says, "The meaning of the life of each individual is inseparable from that of the history of mankind which in each age presents mankind with a certain task."<sup>1</sup> The more intensive and full the life of the individual, the more profound and significant the meaning of his life.

According to the Marxist view, the meaning of life is inseparable from man's vocation and purpose. The correct answer to the question of man's vocation derives logically from a scientific understanding of man's essence.

Quite early, in *The Holy Family* to be precise, Marx and Engels wrote that people's concepts of man's vocation and purpose could not be separated from the conditions in which they lived, their practical conflicts and contradictions. "If the Ego is divorced from all its empirical conditions of life, its activity, the conditions of its existence, if it is separated from the world that forms its basis and from its own body, then, of course, it has no other vocation and no other destiny than that of representing the Gaius of the logical judgment..."<sup>2</sup> Marx and Engels based their view on the idea that the concepts of vocation and purpose in class society are conditioned by the position and tasks of the different classes, and they saw the purpose of the proletariat to be the *revolutionisation of existing relations*. They regarded the abolition of bourgeois relations as the basis for the full achievement of man's purpose. "...The workers assert in their communist propaganda that the vocation, destiny, task of every person is to achieve all-round development of all his abilities, *including*, for example, the ability to think..."<sup>3</sup>

Marxist-Leninist philosophy rejects all attempts to seek man's purpose outside of social relations in the realm of abstract ideals, the sphere of the instincts, or that of indi-

<sup>1</sup> I. D. Pantskhava, *Man, His Life and Immortality*, Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1967, pp. 188-89 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1968, p. 319.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 322.



vidual psychology, in activity directed to the satisfaction of selfish interests, not to mention attempts to find it outside the world of real things.

Marxism-Leninism firmly rejects the view that man is born for suffering and death. It also rejects vulgar-hedonistic and vulgar-eudemonist views on the subject. There is no truth in either the exaltation of gloom or in the quasi-optimistic view that every person ought to derive from life the maximum pleasure and enjoyment for himself. In societies based on private-property relations the enjoyment achieved by the minority is paid for by the boundless sufferings of the majority. Nor is this to be regarded as a justification for social pessimism, since the latter treats suffering as inseparable from man in the same way as a thing's shadow is inseparable from the thing itself. Pessimism serves to perpetuate human suffering, making it Fate. Marxism does not recognise fatalism in any form.

Marxist-Leninist philosophy opposes all attempts to introduce elements of mysticism, theologism, or fatalism into the question of the meaning of life and the purpose of man's existence, and treats the whole subject in terms of history, man's present and future. Man's purpose in the Marxist view is creative activity directed towards improved well-being and the achievement of free all-round development for society and all its members.

Naturally enough, not all classes and, certainly, not all individuals take part in the struggle for social progress. The reactionary classes have always fiercely opposed the movement for more perfect forms of social existence. Moreover, throughout the ages the millions of the people, the masses, although they were the motive force of progress, eked out a miserable existence as slaves, serfs and hired labourers, only receiving the crumbs of the material and spiritual values they created.

The fact remains, however, that *at all stages of mankind's development, creative endeavour in the name of a better life has been, and continues to be, the real meaning of life and man's vocation.* One might object that hundreds of bygone generations did not suspect for a moment that in earning their daily bread and struggling for their vital interests they were deciding the course of history, improving the world and creating the new and progressive in every

sphere of life. This is perfectly true, but nevertheless, although generally unaware of the historical consequences of their everyday activity, the masses were indeed the makers of historical progress. The objective existence of a fact and awareness of it are entirely different things. People were fulfilling their true human vocation, most of them unaware of it, but the important thing is that they did so. Social progress is an objective process independent of the will of man.

But there are historically-conditioned limits to this unconscious fulfilment by man of his vocation. With the arrival of the age of socialism and struggle for communism, the achievement of the true meaning of human life becomes a perfectly conscious process so that the social process acquires new rates and scope. Only now are the conditions being created to enable every member of society to work with a clear awareness of his life's aim, which is to promote the common weal.

It might be suggested that the Marxist concept of man's purpose coincides with eudemonism, since the latter also declares happiness to be the purpose of human endeavours. But it all depends on what one means by happiness and by what means one thinks it should be achieved. The supporters of vulgar-individualist eudemonism hold that the only real happiness is personal happiness understood as sensual pleasures, and that the common weal, the happiness of society as a whole, is simply an empty fancy that weakens the individual.

Any attempt to relate man's purpose in life to self-assertion of the isolated individual free from society and existing objective relations, free from historical progress, inevitably leads to fear, anxiety and despair. Vulgar eudemonism is no exception.

Theories of man's purpose and happiness that are rooted in subjectivism and individualism only lead to reactionary, deceptive conclusions. Man can only fulfil his vocation as long as he does not separate his own happiness from the happiness of others.

Man's greatness, the real purpose of human existence lie not in death or the base ideals of vulgar eudemonism, but in the achievement of happiness for all. It is only natural that Marxism should be irreconcilably opposed to eude-

monism, even the so-called *social eudemonism*, which is an attempt to combine the happiness of the individual with the happiness of the majority or the whole of society. For even its most honest and sincere supporters, such as the French materialists of the eighteenth century, remained utopian in their desire to achieve equal happiness for all within the framework of bourgeois society.

The Marxist concept of man's purpose was fully embodied in the life and activity of Lenin. "Ilyich told the young people that one must devote all one's work, all one's powers, to the common cause," his wife Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya wrote. "And Lenin's life was a demonstration of how to do this. He was incapable of living otherwise. He was not an ascetic: he was fond of skating, cycling, climbing and hunting, he loved music, loved life in all its manifold beauty, loved his comrades, loved people. Everyone knows of his simplicity and his gay, infectious laughter. But everything was subordinated to one aim: struggle for a happy, enlightened, affluent, meaningful and joyous life for all. Nothing delighted him more than success in this struggle. In him the personal was organically combined with his social activity."<sup>1</sup>

Great humanist that he was, Lenin saw man's vocation as service to the proletariat, and through it the whole of mankind. As G. M. Krzhizhanovsky wrote, "in service to the world's greatest revolution he consumed all his energy, consumed his brilliant mind with intense thought," but "...even at his dying day he still doubted whether his contribution had been enough, the contribution of his very life."<sup>2</sup>

Lenin's noble understanding of the meaning and purpose of life, and his own fine life, have been, and continue to be, a source of inspiration and instruction to generations of revolutionaries.

The following words of Felix Dzerzhinsky serve as a good example of the at once inspired and realistic approach of the Marxist revolutionary to the questions of man's purpose, the "secret" of human life, the problems of suffering and

fear of death. "To be a bright light for others and radiate light oneself is the highest happiness that a man can attain. For then he fears not suffering or pain, misfortune or want, and ceases to fear death, although it is only then that he learns to really love life."<sup>1</sup>

The struggle for people's happiness requires self-sacrifice and courage, but it is in this selfless service to mankind that a man's greatness and beauty stands out in the highest relief.

The Czech Communist Julius Fučík wrote shortly before his death at the hands of the nazi butchers, "We did our duty, we lived for joy, for joy we went into battle and for it we died." A life devoted to the joy of others, their happiness, freedom, equality and welfare, for the triumph of genuinely human relations, conscious struggle for a new social order, for socialism and communism—this is what constitutes the meaning of life and real happiness for the progressive in our day and age.

Our opponents try to discredit the Marxist-Leninist view of man's purpose by insisting that it involves renunciation of personal happiness—asceticism. In actual fact, the building of socialism and communism is intended to ensure the greatest happiness for every man, and it is therefore not surprising that people are prepared to overcome all obstacles, to dedicate all their efforts, even their lives, to the achievement of this noble and inspiring goal.

The Marxist-Leninist concept of man's purpose is based on knowledge of the objective tendencies of historical development and progress, on the dialectical-materialist view of the relationship between the objective tendencies of historical development and conscious subjective activity.

Every age presents certain tasks, determined by its inherent processes connected with mankind's general advance. Man's purpose in a particular age is determined by the solution of these tasks, by mankind's advance along the path of social, scientific and technological, and spiritual, including moral, progress. As the German Marxist M. Klein aptly notes in his short but interesting article "Man's Pur-

<sup>1</sup> N. K. Krupskaya, *Lenin and the Party*, Moscow, 1963, p. 167 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1957, Vol. 2, p. 670 (in Russian).

<sup>1</sup> *Morality as Understood by Communists*, Moscow, 1962, p. 104 (in Russian).



pose in Our Age": "If the humanitarian ideals of the history of mankind can only find their subsequent development in connection with the struggle of the working class and all progressive forces for peace and socialism, man's purpose in our age only consists in aware participation in this struggle and devoting all one's powers and capacities to ensuring its victorious outcome."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, man's true purpose is to devote his energy to the solution of the tasks advanced by history, to improve social life, increase mankind's powers, overcome the opposition of those who are trying to prevent him from rising a step higher, and to extend human happiness. This is not an *a priori* assumption or an abstract moral imperative, a statement of some abstract duty, but a conclusion deduced from study of the history of mankind, of man's present and predictable future. This view reflects the historical truth imbued with profound social optimism, inspiring man with faith in his own powers and making him more determined, enterprising and creative.

### 3. Man's Value. A Criticism of Abstract Humanitarianism

The question of the value of man as a species and an individual person is central to the whole subject of humanism.

What constitutes this value and what determines it? Is it absolute or relative? What is its criterion? In our age of social transformations, an age which presents mankind with great prospects for future development but also with serious dangers, there has naturally been a sharp growth of interest in these questions.

Bourgeois theories which divide mankind into "personalities" and mere *homo sapiens* have been clearly disproved by the simple fact that in some parts of the world the masses, who had hitherto been denied even the right to be regarded as persons, have acquired freedom and created socialist society, in which man is accorded the highest value.

<sup>1</sup> M. Klein, "Von der Bestimmung des Menschen in unserer Epoche", *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, Heft 5, 1963, Berlin, S. 541.

These theories also collapsed under the impact of the national liberation struggle of the mid-twentieth century anti-colonial revolutions.

Today, few bourgeois philosophers and sociologists dare express openly chauvinistic and racist views or only recognise the value of individual "supermen" and "men of destiny". This is quite understandable, for in our "century of the masses" as the present era has been called, forthright attacks on the working people and denial of their value are unpopular to say the least. As a result, we now find ever more frequent appeals in bourgeois writings for the need to recognise the value of the working man and the role of the masses in history.

Indeed, the scene is really quite extraordinary: the ideologists of a socio-economic system that translates all real human values into terms of exchange value are claiming to be the true "champions" of the value of the individual person! The theoreticians of Right-wing social democracy join the chorus. Thus, in an article in defence of man's "absolute" value, the Austrian Right-wing socialist Neumann writes: "Nobody has the right to use man as a means to exploit him and manage him in any way."<sup>1</sup> Man must be ennobled and raised to the position of the lord of the material world—this is the grandiose task it is our destiny to perform, proclaim the spokesmen of Right-wing social democracy.

All these declarations are extremely abstract, however, and one asks how it is that a person can simultaneously recognise the value of man and support the capitalist system of relationships and all that it involves in human terms—the debasement of man and the mutilation of his genuinely human qualities, how one can exalt man and at the same time condone a policy of war and colonialism.

We find statements about man being the highest value in practically all the programmes of Right-wing socialist and reformist parties and in all books in praise of "democratic socialism". Yet none of these programmes or books make any mention of the abolition of private ownership, the basis of exploitation and the domination of some men over others. Clearly then, all the fine-sounding statements

<sup>1</sup> *Die Zukunft*, Heft 8/9, Wien, 1962, S. 245.

about the absolute value of man, his transformation from object to subject and so on are devoid of any real content and are only capable of giving birth to empty and harmful illusions. It is enough to remember the tens of millions of people who have died in wars brought about by imperialism and the permanent armies of unemployed in the most developed capitalist countries to realise what abstract declarations of the value of man "in general" are really worth.

The vast majority of bourgeois philosophers and moralists, the theoreticians of Right-wing social democracy, contemporary revisionism and reformism, emphasise the "autonomy" of the human personality, its "sovereign nature" regardless of external factors. Making no distinction between the two concepts of "man" and "person", they declare that man's value is only possible as the autonomous achievement of integral freedom, freedom from all that is extraneous to man's spiritual essence.

Thus, like the "theoreticians" of various anthropological and religious-idealist conceptions, they adopt an unsound approach to the whole question, since they do not distinguish between the value of man as a representative of the species and the value of man as a person. Identifying the biological and social aspects, they treat man metaphysically, either regarding him as a static autonomous essence, or making use of the concept of "personality" and ascribing to it an invariable spiritual essence.

Many bourgeois philosophers and moralists treat the whole question in terms of principles similar to Kant's logic of "practical reason", regarding man's value as an axiomatic truth that requires no proof. They tend to regard with profound suspicion any attempt to substantiate the value of the human personality regarding it as an expression of doubt in the existence of such value.

Even the absurd idea that Marxism denies the value of man is "substantiated" by reference to the "fact" that Marxism establishes inner ties between the person and objective social relations. Many bourgeois writers claim that man has no autonomous value according to communist ideology since materialism has it that man belongs entirely to the material world where there is no such thing as a subject having an independent value. Resorting to the old

"argument", long since refuted by Marxism, that freedom and necessity are mutually exclusive, they say that if a man's mind, feelings and actions are determined by objective, necessary factors this means that he has no freedom, is subject to external influences and hence can have no value.

But what if historical necessity exists in both nature and social life? The idealist, in the name of freedom (as he misunderstands it) and man's value, rejects historical necessity quite arbitrarily, transferring the question to the realm of the abstract. It is also worth noting that he accuses Marxism of denying man's value for the simple reason that it excludes complete human freedom, independent of the external world. Yet objective idealism, whether of a secular or religious variety, also denies that man is completely free, since it rejects the connection between man and the material world only to assert the ascendancy of absolute spirit, God, etc. It would be logical, therefore, to ascribe denial of man's value to objective idealism too. However, the idealists naturally stop short of this logical conclusion.

*The theological conception of the value of the individual person* is widely propagated in the bourgeois world. Religion has always encouraged servile worship of the supernatural, and theologians of various trends are wont to treat man's value as dependent on God, despite all their talk of "freedom".

In this connection, it is interesting to see the traditional Christian view of man's value being criticised by none other than the Christian existentialist Nikolai Berdyaev. He writes that the Christian teaching on man is contradictory. On the one hand, Christianity has exalted man as has no other ideology, declaring him to be God's creation, created in God's image, and thus according man spiritual freedom, placing him above the rest of creation. On the other hand, the Christian faith was used against man. Man was declared to be sinful, and the only aim of his life was to free himself from the burden of sin and save his soul, which has meant making man a subordinate, passive creature, lowering him and depriving him of creative energy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> N. Berdjajew, "Alt und neue Wege des Humanismus", *Theologische Zeitschrift*, Basel, 1946, März-April, S. 124.



The champions of traditional Christianity can hardly refute this appraisal. But it would be naive to think that Berdyayev made his criticism with a view to reaching a scientific solution of the problem of man's value. We are merely dealing with an attempt to renovate somewhat the old religious idealist concepts and make them appear more plausible. Man acquires value and creative freedom through awareness of being a "free spirit", independent of the laws of nature and society, reflecting some "higher being".

The numerous statements by various representatives of the theological conception of man's "autonomous value" are directed against admission of the link between man and material social relations in order to subordinate him to absolute spirit, a "higher being", God.

The theological conception of the value of the individual was widely represented at the International Philosophy Congress in Mexico City. Thus, Gabriel Marcel, stated in his address: "I regard every human being to be worthy of respect by virtue of the very mystery of the sources and aim of which he is the living witness."<sup>1</sup>

The idealist view that man has an absolute independent value and is essentially free from both material social relations and any kind of extraneous spiritual principles, is not new. It was advanced in its original form early in the history of philosophy, when the idea of humanism was associated with recognition of the value of man as an independent being, free from God. It was expressed, for example, in Protagoras' dictum "Man is the measure of all things". It was developed by the pre-Marxian humanists in their struggle against feudal ideology, and was then historically progressive, serving man's self-assertion. Today it plays an entirely different social role: denial of man's social essence and the idea that man is independent of existing social relations serves only to prevent a proper understanding of man's value as a person. From being an attack on the firmly established authority of God and those who spoke in his name, it has become a theory directed above all against Marxism, against the Marxist theory of man's essence and value.

<sup>1</sup> *Memorias del XIII Congreso Internacional de Filosofía*, Vol. 1, p. 13.

We have already seen how according to the existentialist credo real man is the individual man free from all social ties. The existentialists also accord man an independent, absolute value, which is the greater the freer he is from society, from existing social relations and ties. The supporters of the psychological trend in sociology, particularly the Freudians, also build their arbitrary theories of man on this subjective-idealist foundation.

The attempt to call in question the incontrovertible truth that man is a social being is an expression of the extreme bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism of the imperialist age.

We have already noted how in the bourgeois world the ruthless and cynical humiliation of man, reducing him to a means of enrichment for the few, goes hand in hand with hosannas to the absolute value of the individual person. But this is found mainly in abstract-scholastic philosophy, sociology and ethics, which deliberately avoid too close a connection with reality.

At one time bourgeois ideologists openly declared that a man only becomes a true personality, a true citizen, by becoming a man of property. When capitalism was in the ascendant this was quite understandable, for the bourgeois relations based on private ownership were regarded as the only reasonable and progressive social relations. The formation and development of the personality was associated with these relations, and bourgeois property, supposedly produced by "individual effort", was declared the criterion of the value of the man of property.

No wonder that from the time of the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* and for some time afterwards bourgeois ideologists interpreted the demand for the abolition of private property as tantamount to the abolition of the personality, of the value of the individual. They were, in fact, admitting that they regarded only the man of property as a personality, and estimated a man's value in terms of the amount of capital he had.

Marxism firmly rejects all attempts to seek the criterion of a person's value in either the supernatural or in his independence from social relations, from the conditions in which he lives and the objective laws of his development.

It is essential to distinguish between the question of the value of the individual as a representative of the human race and the question of the value of the individual as the active subject of the historical process. The concept of value in the latter, philosophical-sociological, aspect, as Professor Chagin rightly notes, includes assessment of the objective importance of man's activity in definite historical conditions.<sup>1</sup> The concept of value is thus a unity of objective and subjective, absolute and relative, past, present and future.

Man is a social being. That is his distinguishing feature. He is an organic part of society. This being so, the criterion of a person's value must be sought in the sphere of social relations, in the sphere that determines man's essence.

Marxism does not deny that man has a great value anthropologically too, if we regard him as the highest link in the development of the organic world on this earth, capable of creative activity, as a representative of the species.

Marxist anthropologists hold that the race or nation a man belongs to makes no difference to his value as a representative of the human race. Man is the highest value irrespective of the colour of his skin or the language he speaks, or any other racial or national features. In this the Marxists are at odds with many reactionary bourgeois theoreticians and public figures who preach and practise racist and chauvinist theories, and uphold various anti-humanitarian theories of the inferiority of certain races and nations.

The Marxist view of man as the highest value in the world is displayed in the everyday practical activity of the Marxist-Leninist parties, in their courageous, selfless struggle for the freedom and happiness of all people. This activity is a vivid and telling expression of recognition of the value of man and human life.

When it comes to defining this value, however, it must be remembered that man is a social as well as a biological being, and that therefore metaphysical absolutisation of biological man and the solution of the question of his value purely in anthropological terms must be regarded as unscientific.

<sup>1</sup> See *Problems of Value in Philosophy*, Moscow, 1966, p. 7 (in Russian).

"Man is an artist by nature," Maxim Gorky wrote. "He endeavours everywhere, in some way or other, to introduce beauty into his life."<sup>1</sup> This feature of man's nature finds eloquent expression in the superb works of art that were produced in different countries in the harshest conditions, under the yoke of slave-owners, feudal lords and foreign invaders.

Everybody knows how in the terrible conditions of struggle against the nazi armies, Soviet soldiers ignored danger and risked their lives to try and save and preserve the historic monuments and artistic values of the peoples of Europe. Thus, for example, the treasures of the Dresden Gallery were saved and handed over to the German people. Everybody knows too the vandalism with which the nazi commanders destroyed historic monuments and art treasures created by the peoples during many centuries. Can we abstract from these two opposite phenomena when dealing with the social value of the individual personality and extend to all men equally Gorky's thesis that man is an artist by nature? Only at the price of renouncing genuine humanism.

The value of man anthropologically, as a representative of the human race, is indisputable, and does not depend upon any physiological, racial, national or other such characteristics. But the concept of value is no longer "independent" and "absolute" when we are speaking of man in the philosophical and sociological aspect, as a person, as the active subject of the historical process. In this case the concept has a quite different content. It is a question of man's social significance as a person, conditioned by the role he plays in the life of society as a social being.

Here the criterion of the value of a person involves recognition of his *real* role in the historical progress of society and mankind as a whole. We are bound to consider the question of whether a person contributes in some way to "the development of man's possibilities", to historical progress, or whether he opposes it.

Man is not the object but the active subject of history. The whole life, the development and progress of society

<sup>1</sup> M. Gorky, *Collected Works* (in thirty volumes), Vol. 25, Moscow, 1953, p. 10 (in Russian).



are determined by people's activity. This being so, the only valid, objective and scientific criterion of a person's social value is their socially useful activity. To reject this criterion is to reject mankind's fundamental interests.

The Marxist-Leninist criterion of a person's value involves recognising the decisive role of the masses in history, revealing their importance as the creators of all that is fine and beautiful in life. The concept of "little" people, the "little" man, as people crushed by their social position, poverty or ignorance feel in capitalist society today, is totally alien to it.

Acceptance of the criterion of socially useful activity means acceptance of the social significance and purpose of man, acceptance of the dignity of the working man and the need to respect him. This is the great humanistic essence of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of man.

A basic premise of Marxism-Leninism has always been the incomparable value of man as the creator of all material and spiritual values. However, Marxist-Leninist humanism goes beyond boundless admiration for man as a great wonder of nature, through which the purposeful improvement and enrichment of nature is possible, to focus attention on the practical ways and means of freeing man from all that might debase him, or hinder him from realising his inexhaustible creative potential.

The concept of love of man is intimately related to the question of man's value. Love of man was an essential feature of the humanist theories of the past and pervaded both ethical treatises and works of art and literature.

Marxism inherited and developed this fine feature of the progressive ideology of the past, which was favoured by the fact that Marxism arose as the ideology of a class of which humanity was a characteristic feature engendered by the conditions of its life and struggle. But the Marxist-Leninist concept of humanism has nothing in common with the religious idealist deification of man and his powers, such as we find in the theories of Feuerbach or various petty-bourgeois ideologies such as *Wahrsozialismus*, in god-building and so on, with which the founders of Marxism-Leninism waged an unrelenting struggle.

Lenin, in a letter to Maxim Gorky, wrote with characteristic revolutionary ardour exposing the pseudo-humanitar-

ian nature of god-building. "Everyone who sets about building up a *God*, or who even merely tolerates such activity, *humiliates* himself in the worst possible way, because instead of 'deeds' he is *actually* engaged in self-contemplation, self-admiration and, moreover, such a man 'contemplates' the dirtiest, most stupid, most slavish features or traits of his 'ego', deified by god-building."<sup>1</sup>

Marxist-Leninist humanism is characterised not by sympathy or pity, as it is in many bourgeois and petty-bourgeois theories that form the basis of sentimentalism and philanthropy, but by profound respect for man and his human dignity as the highest value. One is reminded of Satin's winged words in Gorky's *The Lower Depths*: "Man must be respected! Not pitied! Not humiliated with pity. . . . Man! It has a proud sound!" These words carry a tremendous philosophical meaning.

Although a true successor to the old humanist tradition, the Marxist-Leninist concept of love of man differs essentially from abstract humanism.

Regarding the destruction of capitalism as the decisive condition for the emancipation of man from all forms of economic, political and spiritual oppression by the bourgeoisie, Marx and Engels believed that this great and truly humane task could not be solved without growing hatred among the oppressed for their enemies, and they strove to develop this revolutionary hatred among the proletariat and working masses. Engels pointed out that the workers "can maintain their consciousness of manhood only by cherishing the most glowing hatred, the most unbroken inward rebellion against the bourgeoisie in power. They are men so long only as they burn with wrath against the reigning class."<sup>2</sup>

The revolutionary teaching of Marx and Engels is pervaded with love for the working masses, for the oppressed, and the desire to free them from exploitation and all forms of enslavement. At the same time, their teaching burns with equally powerful hatred for the social conditions that deprive the working people of the elementary conditions

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Britain*, Moscow, 1962, pp. 147-48.

for human existence. These principles were developed in breadth and depth by Lenin, at a later stage in the class struggle of the proletariat, when new conditions prevailed.

Lenin chastised those who tried to extinguish the class hatred of the proletariat for their enemies, poisoning the minds of the working people with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois humanist ideas of "love" and "fraternity" between oppressors and oppressed. He laid bare the sympathy and humanity glorified by apologists of the bourgeoisie, showing what it was really worth, in his brilliant article "In Memory of Count Heyden".

Exposing the hypocrisy of bourgeois "humanity", Lenin deplored the grave social damage caused by the liberal-democratic Philistines who were so moved by this bourgeois "humanity" that they infected the people with the miasma of grovelling and servility instead of instilling in them hatred for the exploiters.

It is well known how Lenin sharply criticised the reactionary side of the Tolstoian ethic, especially the ideas of "non-resistance to evil", abstract "moral self-perfection" and "universal love", as being unscientific and extremely damaging to the revolutionary movement.

But just as the class struggle of the proletariat is not an end in itself but merely the means for accomplishing the historic mission of emancipating mankind from exploitation and enslavement, so class hatred is not a permanent, eternal quality of the communist ethic.

Speaking of class hatred, we must not forget another important aspect of the matter, namely, the quality of hatred. There is a vast difference between hatred based on narrow, selfish class interests, the hatred of the imperialist vultures for all that smacks of democracy and progress, for the masses and progressive mankind, and the hatred of the proletariat for the carriers of exploitation and enslavement. The latter is hatred in the name of freedom and welfare, leading to historic achievements, and involving love for the working man, genuine humanitarianism.

The theorists of modern capitalism widely propagate the ideas of abstract, universal humanitarianism. Such ideas are actively advanced by the organisation for "moral rearmament" in the USA and other capitalist countries, whose representatives preach militant anti-communism, and make

frantic efforts to conceal the social antagonisms in bourgeois society, spreading ideas of "universal brotherhood" and "universal love" among the working masses.

One of their brochures claims that the new kind of man produced by moral rearmament shows that the basic problems of industrial society are not economic but moral. By applying the four moral principles of absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute self-denial and *absolute love*, we can solve problems on the basis of *what* is right rather than *who* is right, thereby replacing the class struggle in industry.

This is a remarkably frank admission of the true essence of the propaganda of abstract humanism, "universal love" and "fraternity" in bourgeois society. The organisation for "moral rearmament" is really intended as a substitute for the class struggle, which explains why such people as Ford, Rockefeller and Hearst have been such enthusiastic supporters of the movement.

Love of man can only become a universal moral principle in human relations in a society where social antagonisms have been abolished. Only socialism makes it possible for love of man and other noble, humanitarian sentiments to break free from the social and other fetters which capitalist society imposes upon them. As Marx put it, with the development of socialism love of man becomes human in the objective as well as the subjective sense. Having a superior type of social relations as its objective basis, love of man becomes a universal moral principle in human relations, a principle guiding people's moral views and behaviour.

Speaking at the 24th CPSU Congress about the moulding of the new man, which constitutes one of the main tasks of the Party in communist construction, Leonid Brezhnev said:

"During the period under review the Party CC has taken steps to create in our society a moral atmosphere that would help to establish a respectful and solicitous attitude to man, honesty, exactingness to oneself and others, and trust combined with strict responsibility and a spirit of true comradeship in all fields of social life, in work and everyday relations."<sup>1</sup>

However, even in socialist society, so long as a capitalist

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Documents, Moscow, 1971, p. 102.



world still exists, genuine love of man is incompatible with abstract humanism, with abstract ethical values, since it of necessity involves implacable hatred for the enemies of communism, the enemies of mankind and true humanity.

#### 4. The Dialectic of Freedom and Necessity and the Question of Moral Responsibility

The question of a *person's moral responsibility* for what happens to other people, to the nations and the whole of mankind, the question of social *conscience*, is a vital aspect of humanism today.

The question of moral responsibility has always had an important place in ethics, and was treated at one time as a question of *man's conscience and duty*, generally in terms of the individual's awareness of his moral responsibility for his behaviour towards the people around him.

Today, however, the question of man's responsibility for the destiny of peoples and mankind as a whole is also involved, and moral responsibility is no longer confined to the realm of ethics and ethical treatises but extends to all spheres of human activity—science, politics, and ideology as a whole.

One of the features of our age is that the danger of thermonuclear war is serving to unite people of different outlook, social status and position, race and nationality and increasing their awareness of individual responsibility for the fate of mankind.

The struggle for peace has led to the development of such concepts as the *conscience of peoples*, the *conscience of mankind* and the *conscience of men of good will*. What is the connection between these concepts which have become the moral basis of the unity of the international peace movement, and Marxist humanism, the Marxist view of personal moral responsibility?

Analysis of the question of personal moral responsibility necessarily involves solving in general philosophical terms the question of individual freedom, the relationship between the objective tendencies of historical development and people's conscious activity, will and conscience.

Today, as in the past, the idealists generally reduce the issue to the question of free will, interpreted in idealist terms, to the question of whether or not a man's actions are conditioned by outside factors. They claim that Marxism precludes humanism, since by recognising that historical development is governed by objective laws, it makes man dependent on historical necessity, thereby rejecting personal freedom, free will, freedom of action, and hence freedom of conscience.

Both religious idealist and subjective idealist philosophers oppose the Marxist-Leninist view of personal freedom.

Thus, Gabriel Marcel writes: "A consistent materialist conception is radically incompatible with the idea of a free man... a man can only be or become free in so far as he is connected with the transcendental, whatever particular form may influence this link."<sup>1</sup>

Marcel reduces the question of personal freedom to the question of freedom in "the beyond". Martin d'Arcy, Jacques Maritain and others also oppose the Marxist view from this religious standpoint. "The materialist view of man and history," d'Arcy writes, "apparently leaves no room for freedom."<sup>2</sup> The American personalists (Flewelling, Brightman, Hocking) and many contemporary imperialist politicians and public figures write in the same spirit.

In fact such views do not usually go beyond a religious-fatalist conception which denies all personal freedom. The essence of this theory, which debases man, was expressed by the British historian Arnold Toynbee, who compared people to pawns in a game played by God.

Despite the limitations imposed by their class views, such great humanists of the past as Spinoza, Helvetius, Diderot and Holbach, connected the problem of personal freedom with economic and political freedom in some way or other, with freedom from political and spiritual bondage. This great achievement of the humanists of the past was consigned to oblivion by subsequent bourgeois ideologists, particularly those who drained the question of its socio-polit-

<sup>1</sup> G. Marcel, *Les hommes contre l'humain*, Paris, 1951, pp. 22, 24.

<sup>2</sup> M. d'Arcy, *Communism and Christianity*, London, 1956, p. 131.

ical content and treated it in abstract terms, as freedom in the world of beyond.

Another group of philosophers and ethicists criticise Marxism from a subjective idealist standpoint. They maintain that Marxism, based as it is on materialism, precludes humanism because recognition of objective laws of development of society and nature makes man subject to fatal forces, condemning him to passiveness and inactivity and depriving him of freedom. This idea is defended by Jean-Paul Sartre, who holds that there are no objectively determined tendencies in nature or society that can restrict man's freedom to any extent, that man is completely free and himself embodies his freedom, that his freedom precedes his essence.

Sartre claims that the aim of his "humanist" philosophy is to free man from the power of any kind of outside force and give him possession of himself. He maintains that man is independent of everything, including society and its moral norms. Man is guided only by his personal, immanent desires and aspirations, and invents and creates his own morality. Sartre's theory of absolute freedom is vividly expressed in his play *Les Mouches*. This is how Orestes, the hero, describes his existentialist "enlightenment" in a conversation with Zeus. "Suddenly, out of the blue, freedom crashed down on me, and swept me off my feet. Nature sprang back, my youth went with the wind, and I knew myself alone, utterly alone in this well-meaning little universe of yours. I was like a man who has lost his shadow. And there was nothing left in heaven, no Right or Wrong, nor anyone to give me orders."<sup>1</sup>

Sartre's voluntarist theory of total freedom is ostensibly humanist in that it appears to liberate man and declare him the rightful master of life. In fact, while appearing to make man free from social laws, it objectively enslaves him to the social forces that oppress him, making him the blind instrument of the objective laws of which he is unaware. This has been convincingly demonstrated by French Marxists in works on existentialism.

Marxism-Leninism refutes the idealist theories of person-

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Altona. Men Without Shadows. The Flies*, Penguin Books, p. 310.

al freedom, which is really no more than freedom in the mind, and affirms *real* freedom, which involves definite material conditions as well as will.

A man cannot ignore the relationships of cause and effect objectively existing in nature and society, for they depend on laws of development of nature and society. But this does not mean that he is simply a cog in a machine, a slave of these laws, the plaything of fate. By discovering these objective laws, people can understand the historical necessity at work and use it in the interests of the development of society. "...Until we know a law of nature, it, existing and acting independently of and outside our mind, makes us slaves of 'blind necessity'. But once we come to know this law, which acts (as Marx repeated a thousand times) *independently* of our will and our mind, we become the masters of nature. The mastery of nature manifested in human practice is a result of an objectively correct reflection within the human head of the phenomena and processes of nature..."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, scientific knowledge of the objective laws and tendencies of nature and society and their objectively correct reflection within the human mind is an essential condition for man's mastery over nature and society. But while being a necessary step towards freedom, an essential precondition, such knowledge is not mastery, but only makes such mastery possible.

Freedom, in the sense of mastery of the laws of nature and society, only comes as a result of *practical revolutionary activity* based on such knowledge of the laws of historical development, especially in the case of the laws of social life, since historical necessity is made up of the activity of people, the masses, classes and parties. As Engels pointed out, "Mere knowledge, even if it went much further and deeper than that of bourgeois economic science, is not enough to bring social forces under the domination of society. What is above all necessary for this is a social *act*."<sup>2</sup>

Regarding phenomena as part of a dialectical process, in their correlations and interaction, Marxist-Leninist philosophy substantiated the thesis that the triumph of the new,

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, p. 376.



developing in the form of historical necessity, is (especially in the period of formation) only a *possibility* of a certain particular development of phenomena, opposed by another line of development. For this possibility to become *reality* there must be activity on the part of masses, classes, parties and individuals. The importance of this activity is all the greater in that reactionary social forces, classes and parties whose interests do not coincide with the objective course of historical development, deliberately oppose it and try to prevent its triumph.

The Marxist-Leninist concept of freedom and necessity also makes possible a scientific approach to the question of war, and the possibility of averting a world nuclear war in present-day conditions.

Marxism-Leninism substantiated the thesis, fully confirmed by life, that war derives from the nature of capitalism, from the objective laws of capitalist development. This is not an admission of the inevitability of war, it is not fatalism, for that would mean excluding the possibility of struggle against war and denying freedom of action and the role of will. While continuing to regard imperialism as a source of war, therefore, Marxists-Leninists regard it as possible to prevent a new world war on the basis of the new relationship of forces that now obtains in the international arena and within the capitalist countries.

It is surely quite clear what tremendous scope knowledge of this thesis gives to every individual to act and manifest his will and reason.

Thus, the Marxist-Leninist view of necessity has nothing in common with the mechanical-materialist fatalist view, whereby people are the mere instruments of blind necessity, but, on the contrary, reveals the conditions necessary for successful action and puts them on their guard against quixotism. Personal freedom is possible through mastery of the objective laws of nature and society, as the result of a constructive, active approach to these laws, as a result of the practical revolutionary activity of the masses, providing boundless opportunities for constructive activity by every individual person.

This being so, it is a gross distortion of the essence of Marxism-Leninism and its doctrine of freedom to identify it, as Martin d'Arcy does, with fatalism and insist that it

denies personal freedom by crushing man under the weight of historical necessity.

Such assertions are so patently absurd that some bourgeois ideologists, including even active enemies of Marxism-Leninism, are forced to admit their sterility and concede that such criticism of "Marxist" determinism is quite off the mark.

As early as 1894, Lenin wrote in *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*: "The idea of determinism, which postulates that human acts are necessitated and rejects the absurd tale about free will, in no way destroys man's reason or conscience, or appraisal of his actions. Quite the contrary, only the determinist view makes a strict and correct appraisal possible instead of attributing everything you please to free will. Similarly, the idea of historical necessity does not in the least undermine the role of the individual in history: all history is made up of the actions of individuals, who are undoubtedly active figures. The real question that arises in appraising the social activity of an individual is: what conditions ensure the success of his actions, what guarantee is there that these actions will not remain an isolated act lost in a welter of contrary acts?"<sup>1</sup>

Some bourgeois ideologists try to identify the Marxist-Leninist view of freedom with the Hegelian. Among them is Heinrich Falk, Professor of Russian and the History of Religion at Berchman University in Bavaria.

Falk cites the following well-known passage from Engels' *Anti-Dühring*, "Freedom does not consist in the dream of independence from natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends.... Freedom of the will therefore means nothing but the capacity to make decisions with knowledge of the subject. Therefore, the freer a man's judgment is in relation to a definite question, the greater is the *necessity* with which the content of this judgment will be determined; while the uncertainty, founded on ignorance, which seems to make an arbitrary choice among many different and conflicting possible decisions, shows precisely by this that it is not free, that it is controlled

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 159.

by the very object it should itself control. Freedom therefore consists in the control over ourselves and over external nature, a control founded on knowledge of natural necessity; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development. The first men who separated themselves from the animal kingdom were in all essentials as unfree as the animals themselves but each step forward in the field of culture was a step towards freedom."<sup>1</sup>

Falk's comment is: "Freedom here is identified with 'knowledge of the facts', i.e., is ascribed to the mind. In reality, however, freedom is a property of the will. Knowledge and appraisal by the mind of several possibilities is merely a condition for, not the essence of, freedom."<sup>2</sup>

We reproduced Falk's quotation from Engels in full in order to provide a plain demonstration of the kind of falsification resorted to by our opponents in their struggle against Marxism. Falk's assertion is absolutely unfounded. Engels actually says that knowledge of necessity is the condition for "control over ourselves and over external nature". Since this control clearly involves an act of will, Engels is simply taking will and mind in their unity.

Falk backs up his idea that freedom belongs to the will and not the mind with the statement that perfect knowledge of the facts often "does not prevent people from acting against their better knowledge and conscience, that is, stupidly and unjustly".<sup>3</sup> There is admittedly some truth in these words. Thus, knowledge of the likely consequences of a thermonuclear war does not prevent the imperialist reactionaries from pursuing their insane militarist policy. But it is not with the "knowledge of the facts" that we should associate such stubborn ignoring of the consequences of war, but with the policy of the monopolies. It is conditioned by the hatred of socialism, which blinds the reason of the most aggressive and reactionary sections of imperialism.

Everyday practice clearly demonstrates that freedom of the will is conditioned by knowledge of the objective laws

of nature and society. Part of the bourgeoisie today opposes nuclear war and supports peaceful coexistence with the world socialist system as a result of a sober appraisal of the military might of the Soviet Union and the whole socialist world and the disastrous consequences such a war would entail. Clear understanding of the possibility of preventing a new world war makes men of good will in all the capitalist countries join the struggle to prevent it from happening.

Thus it is a question not of an abstract knowledge of nature and its objective laws but of mastering them and using them on the basis of knowledge.

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The Marxist-Leninist theory of moral responsibility developed, in organic relationship with the problem of freedom, in struggle against both fatalistic and subjective-idealist theories. Fatalism excludes even relative individual freedom, thereby denying the importance of personal moral responsibility and conscience altogether. Justifying all kinds of ideas about divine providence, it makes man a spiritual slave, and stifles all will to act.

With its logic of making everything dependent upon inexorable necessity, fatalism calls for reconciliation with reality. It was the basis of the famous statement: "Humble yourself, proud man." Unless we are to resort to sophisms, as the theologians do, we must say outright that fatalism thereby excludes the moral responsibility of the individual for his role in society, for his behaviour. The heirs of these propositions are the modern neo-Thomists and personalists.

The subjective idealists reject determinism, deny the importance of objective laws of historical development and treat personal moral responsibility merely as "absolute" freedom of the will. Man is declared responsible for his behaviour on condition that his freedom is unrelated to, and unrestricted by, anything at all. This is essentially the basis of Sartre's treatment of the idea of moral responsibility, which occupies a large place in his philosophy.

"...But if existence really does precede essence (the idea that it precedes essence is, as we have seen, the basic premise

<sup>1</sup> F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, pp. 136-37.

<sup>2</sup> H. Falk, *Die ideologischen Grundlagen des Kommunismus*, München, 1961, S. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



underlying Sartre's conception of the individual—*M.P.*) man is responsible for what he is. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

It is noteworthy that Sartre does examine the question of personal moral responsibility, for many bourgeois ethicists, especially in Britain and America, completely ignore this matter which is of such vital importance in our day, and confine themselves to so-called "metaethics", formal analysis of ethical definitions and moral judgments. However, the subjective-idealist principles underlying existentialism lead to a misrepresentation of the very concept of moral responsibility.

If one accepts the idea of the "absolute freedom" of the individual then there is a certain logic in Sartre's reasonings and in his conclusion. In actual fact, however, man is never completely free to choose the conditions of his life, for the system of social relations in which a person lives is objective and he cannot ignore it or alter it to suit himself. If every person were free to choose the conditions of his life, if they depended entirely on the will and wishes of each individual, people would undoubtedly choose an ideal system in which there is no exploitation, unemployment, national inequality, racial discrimination, or danger of war.

By rejecting the importance of objective laws of social development and proclaiming "absolute freedom", Sartre, whatever his subjective intentions, is in fact placing the responsibility for all social evils not on the capitalist system and its supporters, the carriers of social evil and injustice, but on the working man, since he is supposedly making a free choice of his conditions.

This is implicit both in the statement "You are free, you yourself choose your conditions of life, so you must answer for them" and in the proposition that follows it: "...when we say that a man is responsible for himself, we do not only mean that he is responsible for his own individuality, but that he is responsible for all men".<sup>2</sup>

At first sight this proposition may appear to stress the importance of a sense of responsibility. In fact it merely

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism and Human Emotions*, New York, 1957, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

serves to disorientate people with its basic premise: you are free, you choose your own life, so you are responsible for it and for all men. This logic lumps together in the same category Rockefeller and an unemployed worker, the war criminal and his victim, the colonialist and the man he has enslaved, treating all men alike as carriers of evil.

In an attempt to give his theory a universal significance, Sartre writes: "Thus, our responsibility is much greater than we might have supposed, because it involves all mankind. If I am a workingman and choose to join a Christian trade-union rather than be a communist, and if by being a member I want to show that the best thing for man is resignation, that the kingdom of man is not of this world, I am not only involving my own case—I want to be resigned for everyone."<sup>1</sup>

This example reveals the weakness of Sartre's whole view of the matter. To begin with, it contradicts the basic tenet of the existentialist conception of the individual. For if man's will is indeed entirely free and independent of existing moral norms, then the idea that my choice of behaviour "involves" all mankind is unwarranted, for the two ideas are incompatible. But even if we are prepared to turn a blind eye to this contradiction and accept the statement at its face value, we still have not solved the question at all, since without understanding the objective bases of moral responsibility we cannot possibly develop a correct criterion of behaviour, we cannot determine who is right—the worker who joins a Christian trade union, and appeals for resignation, or the worker who commits himself to the struggle for communism.

The knowledge that by my own personal behaviour I am "involving mankind as a whole" is not determining. Moral responsibility is more than the fact of such knowledge. No doubt the majority of workers who join a Christian trade union and call for resignation are convinced that this is best for all men, and that this is what all mankind should choose. But this awareness does not make their actions any more correct. This approach cannot satisfy a Marxist.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

If one strictly adheres to the idealist principles, accepting all the implications, and proceeds from the idea that absolute personal freedom is the basis of moral responsibility, rejecting the objective basis of conscience, then it is quite impossible to determine who is right and who is wrong. This is the root of the *moral scepticism* and *nihilism* propagated by a number of bourgeois ethicists. Suffice it to mention the neo-positivist Ayer, who maintains that ethical statements are not descriptive of anything and are therefore not really statements at all, so that there is nothing surprising in the fact that some people regard one thing as true and good, while others regard the same thing as false and evil.<sup>1</sup>

In its search for a criterion of moral responsibility existentialism turns to the concept of *fear*, fear that others will act in the same way. The attempt to connect personal moral responsibility with other people acting the same way is not new in the history of ethics. It is but one version of the moral principle that was given its classic formulation by Kant, who insisted that a person should behave in such a way that it could become a general principle of behaviour for all.

In existentialism awareness of fear is substituted for universal applicability. While it is true that fear does have a certain importance, for instance as a sobering influence on certain groups in the matter of nuclear war, it can hardly be regarded as a general scientific criterion. Suffice it to remember that fear is a major feature of diametrically opposed interpretations of moral responsibility, being used both in the peace movement and for the purpose of demonstrating the need for the arms race and nuclear weapons.

There are several conclusions to be drawn from the above.

The objective-idealist or fatalist interpretation of the question of man dispenses with individual freedom of will, proceeding from the premise that everything is predetermined by some supernatural power. People are regarded as prisoners of fate, obedient to its commands. So that only by betraying the laws of logic can the medieval and modern

theologians and the contemporary neo-Thomists and personalists reconcile providence (and other forms of fatalism) with free will and the possibility of choice.

To speak of personal responsibility from a fatalist standpoint involves the most glaring contradictions. A man whose thoughts and actions are strictly ordered by external forces cannot have a sense of responsibility. Everything is predetermined by some metaphysical forces, extraneous to the natural order of things. In this case people cannot be regarded as responsible for the course of social events. The individual can only be an instrument of fate, and his role is restricted to that of the passive onlooker. Such is the anti-social and amoral conclusion to be deduced from the objective fatalist conception of social development.

Clearly then, voluntarism and fatalism, despite their apparent irreconcilability, lead to similar conclusions as regards personal responsibility.

Of course, it is possible, by making the free "independent" will and mind the motive forces of social development, to substantiate assertions of personal responsibility. But the point is that the possibility and necessity of such responsibility is based on metaphysical factors and hence reduced to nought. If one ignores the laws of social development one cannot possibly form a correct understanding of one's place in life, one's purpose or responsibility, since one's views will be purely subjective, and there will be as many views of responsibility as there are people. Everyone will be free to assess events in his own way and form his own view of his personal responsibility. Clearly we are dealing with a theory which is more suited to justifying irresponsibility than responsibility.

A genuine, scientific conception of moral responsibility can only be based on the materialist view of history. Moral responsibility or conscience is not the voice of God in man, as the neo-Thomists maintain, not an internal psychological state, independent of external conditions. Nor is it simply fear of an outside power. The concept of conscience presupposes the unity of mind, feeling and will. It undoubtedly involves personal freedom, but real relative freedom and not some imaginary absolute freedom. A man's life is conditioned by objective factors that are independent of his wishes, and they also determine his behaviour. Never-

<sup>1</sup> See A. Ayer, *Philosophical Essays*, London, 1954, pp. 231, 247.



theless, however much his actions may be determined, man is relatively free, for he can decide the general course of his life and behaviour. Thus, the miners of Kentucky were not free to choose the conditions of their life and are not responsible for them, but they chose their behaviour. For more than half a year ten thousand of them were on strike, struggling for a minimum wage, undeterred by the fact that several of their houses were dynamited and they had to take pistols and rifles with them whenever they went into the street.

Recognising relative freedom, Marxism-Leninism revealed the tremendous importance of the will and actions of the masses and individuals. The Marxist-Leninist theory that the masses are the active makers of history and their role increases in connection with the deepening of social processes, and especially in socialist society, shows the importance of the conscious activity of the individual and the individual's responsibility for his actions.

The objective basis of personal responsibility for what happens to other people and the development of society is the historical necessity of the collapse of capitalism and the triumph of socialism. Knowledge of this objective, historically-conditioned tendency helps the international proletariat in their struggle for the triumph of communism and is a reason for the courage and selflessness of Communists.

Thus, recognition of the objective laws of social development does not diminish an awareness and sense of moral responsibility, but, on the contrary, is their objective basis. Denial of this basis narrows down and distorts the concept of moral responsibility. If one denies the objective criterion of moral responsibility and proceeds from "absolute" individual freedom, it is impossible to distinguish between moral responsibility in the sense of "blame" and responsibility as an expression of conscience, associated with an awareness and sense of duty towards other people, the masses and mankind (as we have clearly seen in the case of existentialism), and unless this distinction is made there can be no question of a scientific understanding of the matter.

Knowledge of existing social relations and the tendencies of development they condition is the only valid basis for a correct understanding of social phenomena and people's responsibility for their role in the development of society.

The materialist view of history makes it possible to determine the role the individual should play in accordance with his vocation and duty. By revealing the real causes of social phenomena it enables us to establish the real conditions of conscious activity.

As Lucien Sève so rightly notes: "...This approach is very different from the hazy and purely speculative idea, extremely fashionable in some present-day contemporary personalist and existentialist writings, that each individual should regard himself as bearing within him all the sins of the world. The main thing for Marxism is to accurately establish that by my every single action or failure to act I am being an agent of a certain given determinism and thereby assume a greater or lesser amount of responsibility."<sup>1</sup>

Recognition of the objective laws of historical development helps people to steer clear of the quixotism and adventurism that naturally ensue from ignoring objective reality.

Bourgeois ethics, bourgeois ideology as a whole, being based on individualism and an idealist view of history, is incapable of providing a correct solution to the question of personal moral responsibility. The general tendency is to treat the whole matter as if it concerned only a narrow group of outstanding personalities, constituting an élite, which is the logical consequence of denying the role of the masses as the motive force of the historical process. There can hardly be any question of the moral responsibility of the working man when the masses are regarded as something inanimate and passive.

The grandiose social changes of the last few decades, successes in the building of socialism and communism, the triumph of socialist revolutions in several European and Asian countries, the courageous struggle of the peoples of the colonial countries for their independence, and that of the peoples of the world against the threat of a new world war, all clearly demonstrate the decisive and growing role of the masses as the makers of history. The pressure of life itself is forcing many of the more cautious bourgeois ideologists to write of the need to review their position with

<sup>1</sup> L. Sève, "Sur la conception marxiste de la responsabilité", *La Pensée*, No. 101, 1962, p. 99.

regard to the role of the masses and their whole attitude towards them. However, this does not alter the essential character of bourgeois sociology and the corresponding conceptions of man remain fundamentally unchanged.

The scorn for the masses and especially the working man characteristic of contemporary bourgeois ideology obviously excludes the possibility of a correct understanding of the question of personal moral responsibility. Many contemporary bourgeois ideologists insist that the man-in-the-street only feels responsibility towards a small group of people, the people with whom he associates and comes into direct contact. The idea that he might be committed to something more is rendered "unreal" by his social position. Undisguised attempts are made to relate sense of responsibility entirely to the obligations of the man-in-the-street towards the bourgeois state and the whole bourgeois establishment. In this aspect a sense of responsibility is no more than a sense of resignation and acceptance.

The purpose of this interpretation is to divert the working people from interfering in affairs of primary sociopolitical importance, and remove from the masses all responsibility for their own lives and the destiny of mankind. It also reveals the anti-humanism of bourgeois ideology of the age of imperialism, contempt for the working masses and the man-in-the-street.

Limiting the responsibility of the working man to the "domestic round", the ruling classes at the same time attempt to reserve for themselves full "responsibility" for mankind's present and future.

In Marxist-Leninist ethics, on the contrary, it is not only outstanding "personalities", statesmen and leaders that are regarded as the subjects of moral responsibility, but also the actual carriers of historical progress, the working masses. Thus, according to the materialist view of history moral responsibility for the destiny of society rests with the masses, the common people whose mind and will reactionary sociologists see fit to ignore.

Naturally, the possibility of acting in accordance with a sense of responsibility is realised in practice to a different degree at different stages of social development. The spontaneous unaware nature of this development at stages of development prior to the socialist stage naturally impeded

and impedes the free choice of the masses of their behaviour and also restricts the possibility of being aware of their responsibility. The establishment of a social order abolishing social antagonisms, absence of planning, production anarchy and widespread ignorance among the masses greatly increase the opportunities for the masses and the individual to act in accordance with a high sense of responsibility, with maximum confidence of achieving their aims.

The Marxist-Leninist attitude to the masses determines not only the view of personal moral responsibility but also the content and scope of the concept. The view that man is the highest value is certainly the basis of any awareness and sense of responsibility. But in the Marxist view personal moral responsibility goes beyond the framework of relationships with a single person or a small circle of people and is related to duty to the proletariat, the people and mankind.

The assertions that Marxism-Leninism subordinates conscience and moral responsibility entirely to the interests of the proletariat and dispenses with the universal aspect of the problem are quite unfounded.

Despite the fundamental difference between the Marxist-Leninist view of duty and moral responsibility and various bourgeois views, today there are problems that in the interests of all mankind require mutual understanding between people with different political, philosophical, ethical and religious views and beliefs.

What determines the possibility and necessity of such mutual understanding? The answer to this question, it would seem, must be sought above all in the existence of certain basic universal moral norms.

Acceptance of the class nature of moral principles and the irreconcilability of the moral principles of antagonistic classes, does not exclude a common stand in the defence of moral and legal principles where it is in the interests of all mankind that they should be observed. This was what made possible the passing by the UN General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (December 10, 1948), the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (December 9, 1948), the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (March 31, 1953),



the Declarations of the Rights of the Child (November 20, 1959) and the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (November 20, 1963), and various other important international documents.

In his speech at the session of the General Assembly dedicated to the fifteenth anniversary of the passing of the Declaration of Human Rights, the Soviet delegate said that the passing of the Declaration had been an affirmation of the faith in basic human rights. The idea of confirming these rights evolved during the Second World War, when monstrous acts of violence shocked the conscience of mankind.

The most fundamental universal moral principle today is defence of the peoples and mankind from the threat of destruction by nuclear war.

The unity and correspondence of the communist concepts of conscience and moral responsibility with the concepts of the conscience of the peoples, of mankind, the conscience of men of good will, have an objective basis. It is a feature of our age that the struggle for peace, as never before, has become a major historical task not only of the working class but of all other social strata, has become the point of intersection of the interests of all mankind, the point where the most heterogeneous mass movements whose aim is to save mankind from the disaster of a war flow together, uniting in a single stream.

The Main Document of the Moscow Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, held in 1969, said: "*The main link of united action of the anti-imperialist forces remains the struggle against war for world peace, against the menace of a thermonuclear world war and mass extermination which continues to hang over mankind. A new world war can be averted by the combined effort of the socialist countries, the international working class, the national liberation movement, all peace-loving countries, public organisations and mass movements.*"<sup>1</sup>

The profound ideological differences between Marxists and bourgeois intellectuals, which also apply to the inter-

pretation of humanism, do not prevent the unity of all progressive forces over the question of responsibility for preserving world civilisation, saving the lives of hundreds of millions of people, for the present and future of all mankind. Today, the elementary universal concept of conscience, the conscience of men of good will, unites the most various social forces, unites all progressive mankind. In the front ranks are the Marxists-Leninists, people with communist ideology and a communist conscience.

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, Prague, 1969, p. 31.*

SOCIO-POLITICAL ESSENCE  
OF HUMANISM

In examining the socio-political aspect of humanism it is most important to define the concept of *social progress*, and establish its *criterion*.

There are a number of criteria of social progress, revealing the various aspects of the life-activity of that complex social organism that is society and the essence and dynamics of its development. Among them are the level of development of the productive forces, democracy, science and technology, the individual's social position, rights and freedoms, the development of public health, personal spiritual, including moral, development, etc. However, it would be wrong to reduce the concept of progress to a plurality of factors and deny the possibility of a general criterion, as the positivist sociologists do. We hold that it is possible, and indeed necessary, to speak of a criterion of social progress that applies in the most general form to two interrelated spheres: *man's control over the forces of nature and his control over his own social relations*. In their unity these two spheres express the correlation of the level of freedom society has attained—freedom in the sense of control over the forces of nature and its use in the interests of the masses, human freedom in the broadest sense of the word.

The founders of scientific communism examined social progress in the development of human civilisation in these two interrelated spheres. This can be seen from the following classic thesis of Marx's about the antagonistic character of progress in antagonistic-class societies. "At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. . . . All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with

intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force. This antagonism between modern industry and science on the one hand, modern misery and dissolution on the other hand; this antagonism between the productive powers, and the social relations of our epoch is a fact, palpable, overwhelming, and not to be controverted."<sup>1</sup>

However, this is not a simple statement of an historical fact, but a theoretical generalisation of fundamental importance of the features of mankind's historical development, the nature of social progress in capitalist conditions.

It was from this standpoint that Marx proceeded to examine capitalist society and assess the development of human civilisation. Criticising Sismondi, Marx wrote: "...The development of the capacities of the *human* species takes place at the cost of the majority of human individuals and even classes, in the end it breaks through this contradiction and coincides with the development of the individual."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, referring to the dynamics of development of human civilisation, Marx proceeded from the view that in the future, in the conditions of classless communist society, social progress would "*coincide with the development of the individual*". But as long as there existed social antagonisms, the interests of man's development are expressed by the interests of the progressive classes—in capitalist society by the interests of the proletariat, coinciding with those of all mankind.

Lenin shared the same view. For Lenin, as for Marx, the development of the productive forces was the *determinant* factor, the *material basis* of social progress, and hence its *basic criterion*.

However, the founders of Marxism-Leninism never regarded the development of the productive forces as *an end in itself*. For them the purpose of production was always man. Taking account of the objective meaning of the development of the productive forces as the material basis of society, their constant dynamism, they regarded this development in terms of social progress, organically related to

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Moscow, Vol. 1, pp. 500-01.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Moscow, 1968, Part II, p. 118.



the interests of the working masses, to the question of man not as the "human element" of the productive forces (although this was not ignored) but as the *subject of history*, the *highest value*. In his *Agrarian Programme of Social Democracy in the First Russian Revolution of 1905-1907*, Lenin rejected bourgeois evolution along the lines of large-scale land-ownership on the grounds that it entailed the fullest preservation of bondage and oppression, "infinitely greater misery and suffering, exploitation and oppression for the broad mass of the peasantry and, consequently, also for the proletariat".<sup>1</sup>

The exacerbation of class, national, social and other antagonisms in the epoch of imperialism stresses the contradictory nature of social progress, and reveals the organic connection between the interests of the proletariat and the interests of all working mankind.

Developing the Marxist view, Lenin regarded the position and conditions of development of the working masses as a major criterion of social progress. It was from this standpoint that Lenin criticised the views of P. Nezhdanov, a supporter of Struve, in "Reply to Mr. P. Nezhdanov", an article written in 1899. Taking Nezhdanov to task for denying the contradiction between production and consumption in capitalism, and hence the importance of social antagonisms in determining historical development, Lenin wrote: "The contradiction between production and consumption that is inherent in capitalism consists only in this, that the growth of the national wealth proceeds side by side with the growth of the people's poverty; that the productive forces of society increase without a corresponding increase in consumption by the people, without the employment of these productive forces for the benefit of the working masses." "This contradiction does not signify the impossibility of capitalism, but it does signify that its transformation to a higher form is a necessity."<sup>2</sup>

Lenin rejected the idea that capitalism could not play an historically-progressive role. But at the same time he stressed that "a contradiction between consumption and production, between the drive of capitalism to develop the

productive forces to an unlimited extent and the limitation of this drive by the proletarian condition, the poverty and unemployment of the people, is, in this case, as clear as daylight. But it is no less clear that it is correct to draw one single conclusion from this contradiction—that the development of the productive forces themselves must, with irresistible force, lead to the replacement of capitalism by an economy of associated producers".<sup>1</sup>

In studying the contradictory development of scientific and technological progress in the conditions of imperialism, Lenin devoted special attention to the social consequences, its influence on the nature of labour, on intensified physical and spiritual exploitation of the worker. On the basis of social practice, he demonstrated how imperialism, as well as being a regime of exploitation of man by man producing the alienation of man and his essence, the spiritual, including moral, mutilation of people and economic and spiritual enslavement of whole peoples, is also a regime of mass annihilation of people.

Lenin made a systematic and consistent analysis of the way the imperialist policy of national enslavement, and the whole colonial system acts against man's interests, of the entire system whereby the vast majority of men were condemned for centuries to mass hunger, abject poverty and ignorance.

Lenin's analysis of imperialism and the laws of its development, of its internal and external policy and its ideology, showed that the problem of man in the age of imperialism went beyond internal state, and in this sense, class relations, and was organically interrelated with such acute social problems of the age as the abolition of colonialism and imperialist wars. This extended the content and subject-matter of humanism, revealing new aspects of the problem of man, its organic relationship with the dialectic of class and universal human, national and international.

The eminently scientific and humanitarian nature of the Marxist-Leninist conception of social progress, the attitude to man as the most important component of its most comprehensive criterion, is increasingly evident in our age of rapid scientific and technological progress.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 161, 164.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 164.

The social consequences of the present level of scientific and technological progress, have considerably expanded the scope of humanism and brought its socio-political aspect into ever sharper relief, engendering a number of new complex questions connected with the so-called "technological redundancy" of both manual and white-collar workers in capitalist society, with the content and nature of labour, its intensification, physiological and psychological aspects, protection and so on. All these circumstances, but above all the using of the achievements of scientific and technological progress for anti-social purposes as instruments of mass destruction, preparation for nuclear war and the constant threat it presents to mankind, clearly demonstrate the growing importance of the socio-political aspect of humanism in our age.

### 1. The Anti-Humanism of Present-Day Capitalism

Capitalism's hostility to the interests of the popular masses became particularly evident in *the period of the general crisis of capitalism* that followed the First World War and the October Socialist Revolution of 1917.

This period was marked by exacerbation of all the contradictions of capitalism, above all those between labour and capital, an unprecedented hardening of political reaction and the establishment in several countries of bloody dictatorships of the imperialist bourgeoisie in the form of fascist regimes, a profound crisis of bourgeois politics and ideology, overt propaganda of anti-humanitarian ideas and theories by reactionary bourgeois ideologists, a colonial system of merciless brutality, a number of devastating wars and a policy of genocide against whole nations.

The modern scientific and technological revolution presents mankind with unprecedented opportunities for transforming nature, creating vast material wealth, and increasing man's creative abilities. For the first time in human history, man now disposes of the means to abolish hunger, poverty and disease throughout the world and achieve widespread material and spiritual welfare. *But capitalism uses the scientific and technological revolution to increase*

*maximum profits and intensify exploitation of the working people.*

The International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in June 1969 analysed the social consequences of the scientific and technological revolution in the capitalist countries as follows: "The scientific and technological revolution accelerates the socialisation of the economy; under monopoly domination this leads to the reproduction of social antagonisms on a growing scale and in a sharper form. Not only have the long-standing contradictions of capitalism been aggravated, but new ones have arisen as well. This applies, in particular, to the contradiction between the unlimited possibilities opened up by the scientific and technological revolution and the roadblocks raised by capitalism to their utilisation for the benefit of society as a whole. Capitalism squanders national wealth, allocating for war purposes a great proportion of scientific discoveries and immense material resources."<sup>1</sup>

Even in a highly developed capitalist country like the USA, millions of people are unemployed or underemployed. So-called "technological redundancy" produces a vast army of "redundant people", millions of whom suffer from extreme and permanent poverty, and uncertainty of the future. The capitalists use automation to intensify the exploitation of labour and thus increase the profit margin. Workers' wages increase at a far slower rate than productivity and intensification, and incomparably slower than monopoly profits.

Gus Hall, General Secretary of the United States Communist Party, described contemporary US imperialism as follows. "The US financial-industrial capitalist complex, interlocked with the powers of the state machinery at its service, with the new scientific breakthroughs at its command, organised and controlled through monopolies and ever greater monopolies known as conglomerates, has developed into history's most brutal, inhuman, fiendishly efficient, cold-blooded exploiter and devourer of resources—both nature's and man's. It has become an ever more savage monster of exploitation extracting maximum profits. It finds

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969, Prague, 1969, p. 429.*



ever new forms of how to squeeze a little more. During the last ten years the rate of exploitation of labour has been forced up by 17 per cent.

"The special, brutal nature of US capitalism is shown in its oppression of national minorities. For 350 years it has maintained a special system of oppression, applied today to 25 million Afro-American citizens."<sup>1</sup>

The poverty of millions of Americans has become such a problem that even the bourgeois press has been compelled to write about it. At the time when the poor from all over this immensely wealthy capitalist country were marching to Washington, *Time* magazine wrote that the United States is richer than any other country in the world. Yet amid all this wealth is another neglected country consisting of 29,700,000 Americans, three times the population of Belgium. These are the blacks, whites, browns and yellows, men, women and children living beyond the "poverty line".

Mountains of statistics, says *Time*, have been collected on this problem, beginning with Michael Harrington's *The Other America* in 1962 down to a report by the Crusade Against Poverty which claimed that ten million Americans suffered from chronic malnutrition.

Thus, day after day, life confirms the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist thesis of a profound and growing contradiction in capitalist society between the scientific and technological revolution and the position and level of development of the working people, the interests of the popular masses.<sup>2</sup>

Yet in the face of all the facts, the ideologists of contemporary imperialism continue to propagate the ideas of "diffusion" of capitalist private ownership, the "democratisation of capitalism" and the "socialisation of management" of private ownership, the transformation of contemporary imperialism into people's capitalism, the welfare state and so on.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969, Prague, 1969, p. 429.*

<sup>2</sup> We are concerned here only with the human aspect of the scientific and technological revolution, and do not propose to analyse the many other related questions.

<sup>3</sup> The American sociologist Daniel Bell writes: "...private productive property, especially in the United States, is largely a fiction...."

In order to "prove" their unscientific ideas the theoreticians of contemporary imperialism try to make a general economic law of separate phenomena to be found in the highly developed capitalist countries, and completely ignore the concrete-historical development of these countries, the growth of the class struggle of the working people, and, especially, the tremendous importance of the struggle between the two systems, the influence of socialism. They speculate on the relatively high standard of living of a small group of capitalist countries to try and show that exploitation is not an essential feature of the capitalist mode of production, cleverly manipulating the facts of capitalist socialisation of production.

Marxist-Leninist political economy does not deny the possibility of an increase in the workers' earnings and a decrease in the number of unemployed within the capitalist system. Such phenomena, as everybody knows, have been observed in the past, and again in the post-war years, as a result of stop-go expansion of production connected with the growth of armaments and the class struggle of the proletariat. But these phenomena do not alter the general tendency of capitalist production development.

In some capitalist countries, and especially in the USA, the material living standards of part of the working class have definitely risen. However, there are several important factors to be borne in mind. First, it has been achieved as a result of a fierce struggle by the workers, including a sharp increase in strike action,<sup>1</sup> as a result of increased political awareness and organisation of the working class,

"No longer are there America's 'Sixty Families' (or even France's 'Two Hundred'). Family capitalism meant social and political as well as economic dominance. It does so no longer." D. Bell, *The End of Ideology*, The Free Press of Glencoe, Illinois, 1960, pp. 41-42.

<sup>1</sup> Thus, for example, between 1960 and 1968, over 300 million took part in strikes in the advanced capitalist countries, as compared to 150 million in the previous fourteen years.

In the USA there were about 5,000 strikes in 1968; in Japan, the working people's "spring offensive" that same year involved 14 million persons. In France there were about 10 million people on strike in May and June 1968, and 18 million took part in the general strike of February 1969 in Italy.

According to the statistics published by the US Department of Labour, the number of man-days lost in the country due to strikes rose from 97 million in 1961-1965 to 220 million in 1966-1970.

so that it represents a forced concession by the monopolist bourgeoisie. Second, it affects only a certain part of the working class and not the working class as a whole. Third, this increase in material standards lags a long way behind the level of cost of labour and especially the growth in profits reaped by the monopolies.

It must also be borne in mind that any wage increase that has taken place in some advanced capitalist countries has been accompanied not only by price increases but by an unbridled increase in the exploitation of the workers, further intensification of labour with practically complete absence of protection measures, as a result of which there has been a considerable rise in the number of industrial accidents, as well as in the number of workers no longer fit to continue working after 40-45.

Nor should it be forgotten that the rise in the standard of living of the working class in the United States and Britain, for example, is achieved largely thanks to exploitation of the peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies and military super-profits—in other words at the cost of the sweat, blood and lives of millions of people, and also such factors as unequal pay for women and ruthless oppression of negroes and immigrant workers.

All this eloquently confirms Lenin's conclusions set forth in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* and refutes bourgeois and other theories of the gradual improvement of the working people's welfare in capitalist countries, the "democratisation of capitalism", so-called "people's capitalism" and so on. Capitalism has not changed, except to become even more predatory than before.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An article published in the *Saturday Evening Post* towards the end of 1967, entitled "Who Owns America?" is characteristic in this respect. After insisting that the majority of Americans are quite convinced that they own America and that this makes them all capitalists, the author proceeds to examine the incomes of the handful of families who really own America. First, the magnates, or those with a personal income of over 200 million dollars. Among these are the oil magnates Paul Getty and Haroldson Hunt. Getty Oil Company has assets of 1,600 million dollars and Hunt over 1,000 million. The personal capital of each of the principal family members—Ailsa, Paul and Richard—is 500 million each and the aggregate Mellon wealth is at least 3,000 million dollars. The Rockefellers control over 2,000 million.

In 1966 the 500 largest American companies had a total capital of

Endeavouring to "prove" the absence of antagonistic classes in contemporary capitalist society, the ideologists of imperialism and reformism try to distort and refute the Marxist-Leninist thesis that people's place in the system of social relations and above all their relationship to the means of production is the basic and decisive feature of class differences. Rejecting this theory, which has such dangerous implications for capitalism, they speculate on partial changes that have taken place in the developed capitalist countries during the last few years and insist that in present-day bourgeois society the only differences between the classes relate to income, qualifications, the way they spend their earnings, the neighbourhood they live in, cultural level, spare time activities, clothing, education, morals and relations with other people. Some "theorists" even go as far in their efforts to "prove" the absence of classes and class contradictions as to point to such "evidence" as an equal passion for football or television among people with vastly different incomes, and maintain that living in the same kind of houses or the same areas, the possession of a telephone and even a person's appearance are the basis of "social equality".<sup>1</sup>

The well-known US sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset writes in his article "American Sociology in Our Day": "The class structure of society is one of the most studied fields of American sociology. Admittedly, various sociologists attach various meanings to the concept of 'class', but it is increasingly coming to signify the difference that exists between the 'highs' and 'lows' in society. More specifically, the term 'class' indicates a difference in income, in social and economic status, that is to say, in the prestige enjoyed by people who combine a high income with a good position, the possession of a degree of power that decides whether a

282,000 million dollars, of which the first ten super-monopolies accounted for 24 per cent of sales and 25 per cent of the net capital.

This concentration of capital produces a striking disproportion in the distribution of the national income. The families in the top five per cent receive 15 per cent of the national income, the lower 40 per cent about 17 per cent.

<sup>1</sup> Such "theories" are a subject for special study. We only mention them in general terms here in so far as they concern the question of the abolition of classes as a condition for personal freedom and social equality.



man may count on subordinating others to himself or himself to others."<sup>1</sup>

Trying to conceal the exacerbation of class contradictions in present-day bourgeois society, Western sociologists claim that the Marxist-Leninist definition of classes is outmoded and no longer reflects the structure of bourgeois society, which, they insist, tends to be "socially homogeneous" and "mobile". They prefer the concept of strata, *functional groups* united by common interests, to the Marxist concept of class, and declare that present-day capitalism is characterised by a tendency towards class equality, and the disappearance of classes. Thus, the British Labour theorist G.D.H. Cole maintains that the characteristic feature of present-day bourgeois society is social unity rather than exacerbation of class contradictions and intensification of the class struggle!

Yet surely the growth in the number of strikes, despite various attempts to buy off the workers and fierce opposition to the strike movement by the monopolies and the bourgeois state, hardly lends support to such theories. All the "theories" and "proofs" about the disappearance of classes or the erosion of class barriers are completely unrelated to reality, and patently unscientific. Even some Western sociologists are prepared to recognise this. The noted American sociologist Vance Packard, for example, rightly points out that the ordinary American worker does not belong to the upper classes just because he is able to buy a large car (for cash or on hire purchase), and that in fact class barriers, far from being eroded, are becoming stronger than ever, since they now operate according to a person's role in the production process and not as a consumer.

The opinions Stanley Ryerson expresses in his book *The Open Society* are also noteworthy. Analysing the process of concentration of capital in the USA and Canada, Ryerson writes: "It is in the face of such a reality that the big business propaganda to the effect that 'wealth is more and more being equalised' takes on an air of pure nonsensicality..." Many persons, he goes on, "have long been suspicious of the official statistics which purport to show a continuous trend

toward equality of incomes..."<sup>1</sup> Ryerson concludes that the capitalist society as described by Marx "has not 'disappeared'". What has happened is that its principal feature—the concentration of ownership of the tools and means of labour in the hands of a private minority ruling group that dominates and exploits the wage-earning majority—has been carried to a fantastic extreme."<sup>2</sup>

The West German writer Hans Magnus Enzensberger made some very subtle observations about the evils of present-day bourgeois society in an article published in *The New York Review of Books* and subsequently in the *Nouvel observateur*. "Our society," he wrote, "has seen fit to be permissive about the old taboos of language. Nobody is shocked any more by the ancient and indispensable four-letter-words. At the same time, a new crop of words has been banished, by common consent, from polite society: words like *exploitation* and *imperialism*. They have acquired a touch of obscenity. Political scientists have taken to paraphrases and circumlocution which sound like the neurotic euphemisms of the Victorians. Some sociologists have gone so far as to deny the very existence of a ruling class. Obviously, it is easier to abolish the word *exploitation* than the thing it designates; but then, to do away with the term is not to do away with the problem."<sup>3</sup>

The ideas of class "equality" are used to support the theory of the supra-class nature of bourgeois society and bourgeois democracy and hence to substantiate the thesis of "personal freedom" in bourgeois society today.

The social-democratic theorists of capitalism (Blum, Crossman, Crossland, Zering and others) write of state power "breaking free" from the control of the monopolies and passing from the class of property owners to the "class" of managers, company directors, administrators, people who, it is suggested, are independent of the monopolies, live on a fixed salary and are therefore interested in the welfare of society as a whole, the defence of personal freedom and so on.

<sup>1</sup> *Globe and Mail*, October 2, 1962.

<sup>2</sup> S. Ryerson, *The Open Society. Paradox and Challenge*, New York, 1965, pp. 59, 60, 61.

<sup>3</sup> *New York Review of Books*, February 29, 1968, p. 32.

<sup>1</sup> *Amerika* No. 99, 1965 (translated from the Russian).

These and similar hypocritical assertions—of class “equality”, the “classless” character of the bourgeois state, of bourgeois democracy as “pure” democracy, personal “freedom” and “equality” in the capitalist world and so on—are naturally not new and are refuted by the actual state of affairs in capitalist society. Marx, Engels and Lenin submitted such views to extremely sharp and detailed criticism, maintaining and demonstrating that *the decisive condition for genuine personal freedom and equality is the abolition of private property and exploitation, the abolition of antagonistic classes.*

“Until classes are abolished,” Lenin wrote, “all talk about freedom and equality in general is self-deception, or else deception of the workers and of all who toil and are exploited by capital; in any case, it is a defence of the interests of the bourgeoisie. Until classes are abolished, all arguments about freedom and equality should be accompanied by the questions: freedom for which class, and for what purpose; equality between which classes, and in what respect?... If these questions are glossed over, and nothing is said about the private ownership of the means of production, then the slogan of freedom and equality is merely the lies and humbug of bourgeois society, whose formal recognition of freedom and equality conceals actual economic servitude and inequality for the workers, for all who toil and are exploited by capital, i.e., for the overwhelming majority of the population in all capitalist countries.”<sup>1</sup>

Personal freedom involves ensuring the conditions for the practical implementation of the freedoms and rights proclaimed by the law and offering all citizens real conditions for all-round development of their powers and abilities. And practice has shown this to be out of the question in capitalist society.

There was a time when the representatives of the then progressive bourgeoisie opposed feudal inequality under the banner of the theory of “natural law”, the idea that men are born free and endowed by nature with equal rights. Accordingly, the state ought to be based on a “social contract”, the purpose of which, in Rousseau’s opinion was “to find a form of association which will defend and protect

with the whole common force the person and the goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before.”<sup>1</sup>

The ideologists of the progressive bourgeoisie in the eighteenth century sincerely believed in the triumph of a society based on reason, ensuring the freedom and equality for all citizens. The triumph of bourgeois democracy was indeed a great step forward from the Middle Ages. But, although historically progressive, bourgeois democracy, even at the time of its emergence was stunted due to its restrictive, class nature. The freedom and equality the bourgeois constitutions proclaimed were purely formal and were really a means of concealing and strengthening actual economic and political inequality and servitude.

Not only were bourgeois constitutions simply formal declarations of rights proclaiming particular rights of freedoms, but each article was accompanied by reservations and conditions that completely neutralised it. Every paragraph contained its opposite: freedom in the general phrase, its denial in the reservation, as Marx said of the Constitution of the Second French Republic of 1848.

The entire history of capitalism confirms this thesis, revealing the formal and hypocritical nature of bourgeois democracy, bourgeois freedom and equality.

“Take the fundamental laws of modern states,” Lenin wrote, “take their administration, take freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, or ‘equality of all citizens before the law’, and you will see at every turn evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy with which every honest and class-conscious worker is familiar. There is not a single state, however democratic, which has no loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a ‘violation of public order’, and actually in case the exploited class ‘violates’ its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, New York, 1948, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 244.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 393.



History provides ample confirmation of Lenin's theses that the age of imperialism heralds the collapse of bourgeois democracy and parliamentarianism and the bourgeoisie's abandonment of democratic methods in favour of fascist methods of government. Rule by terror, the abolition of bourgeois-democratic freedoms and the main institutions of bourgeois democracy, and militarisation and centralisation of the machinery of state were all features of fascism in Germany and Italy. The inhumane policies of these two states, as everybody knows, took the practical form of overt brutal terror against the working class and the working people, mass arrests and executions, concentration camps, pogroms against the Jews, gas chambers, the horrors of Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Majdanek, genocide and other heinous crimes.

History has shown that the age of the general crisis of capitalism is marked by a crisis of bourgeois democracy. This is expressed in the adoption of fascist methods of government in several so-called democratic bourgeois countries (South Africa and elsewhere) after the Second World War, leading to further intensification of the crisis of the world capitalist system.

The main distinguishing features of the crisis of democracy that Lenin so brilliantly predicted are: the decreasing role of parliament and the decline of the parliamentary system altogether, an increase in "executive" power and the machinery of state and its subordination to the capitalist monopolies, the increasing role of the military, the financial oligarchy making use of the state apparatus for the furtherance of their selfish class interests, fascist methods of dealing with progressive forces within the country, the nullification of the last vestiges of bourgeois-democratic freedoms, McCarthy-type witch-hunts, unbridled racism and chauvinism, the suppression of liberation movements abroad, and so on.

In recent years the crisis of bourgeois democracy has been deepening, and neo-fascist forces are becoming more and more active. The John Birch Society, the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, the American Nazi Party, the National Indignation Convention and other neo-fascist organisations in the United States receive generous financial support from the monopolies.

Fascism is now openly propagated in several capitalist countries. In defiance of history and the truth, and the monstrous role that fascism played in the life of many peoples in the years of the Second World War, the theorists of neo-fascism try to present the fascists as humanists defending the interests of the nation and struggling against social injustice and enslavement. Their cynicism knows no bounds, and they even go so far as to proclaim fascist states "classless", "just" and "democratic" in the true sense of the words. One is thus hardly surprised to learn that they apply the terms "just" and "democratic" to the repressive regimes of Ian Smith, Verwoerd and Franco.

The crisis of bourgeois democracy is analysed in several books published in the USA, among them E. J. Hughes' *America the Uncible*, L. Gurko's *The Crisis of the American Spirit*, C. Lamont's *Freedom Is as Freedom Does*, *The Right of the People* by W. Douglas, a member of the US Supreme Court, and J. Warburg's *The West in Crisis*.

W. Douglas describes mass check-ups on the loyalty of civil servants, telephone tapping, arrests without authorisation and frequent instances of torture being used.

Warburg, writing of the shortcomings of contemporary bourgeois democracy, concludes that "what might be called 'the crisis of capitalism' does not arise from the communist challenge but from the inner defects in the Western economic structure and the defects of Western policy. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

These "inherent defects" reflect the class nature of bourgeois society and the bourgeois state.

History has shown the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist thesis that real freedom is impossible in a society based on private ownership and the power of money. How can there be personal freedom where there is exploitation and oppression, poverty and unemployment, a crisis of democracy, national inequality and racial segregation?

Speaking at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow in 1969, Waldeck Rochet said: "Politically, the monopolies increasingly seek to abolish de-

<sup>1</sup> James P. Warburg, *The West in Crisis*, New York, 1959, p. 60.

mocracy, to exclude any form of mass participation in and control of state affairs, to restrict trade-union rights, substitute for the traditional trade-union institutions structures and agencies suitable to big capital and ensuring the prevalence of its private interests over those of the working masses and the nation as a whole. The regime of personal power is a concentrated expression of this policy."<sup>1</sup>

A clear example of the hypocritical nature of bourgeois democracy, "social equality" and "personal freedom" in the framework of the "American way of life", is the position of millions of Negroes in the United States. In the most advanced capitalist country there exist black ghettos where millions of people live in squalor and filth, deprived of the most fundamental human rights.

*Le Monde* correspondent Jacques Amalric wrote in his article "The American Nightmare" that the ghettos are only one aspect of segregation in the USA, an aspect that immediately strikes one. Here is a vicious circle of the impossibility of acquiring a proper education, a complete absence or chronic shortage of vocational training schools, extremely limited opportunities for obtaining work outside the ghetto, high unemployment, low incomes, appalling sanitary conditions and incredible overcrowding. He goes on to write of the economic interest big business has in preserving and even extending the Negro ghettos. He notes that the Supreme Court order concerning the abolition of segregation in state schools is not being carried out, thereby refuting the statements of official American propaganda on the "success of integration".

The Negro riots that have swept America during the last few years represent the protest of millions of people against intolerable conditions of poverty, absence of civil rights and humiliation. In 1967-69 there were riots in almost a hundred cities and towns. To quell them the authorities sent in troops and police armed with machine-guns, bayonets, batons, and even tanks and helicopters.

For all their talk of personal freedom, the American reactionaries are actually pursuing a policy of racial dis-

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969, Prague, 1969, p. 112.*

crimination. The attention of the whole world has been drawn to the rampant racism in the USA during the last few years. Opposing every attempt by the Negroes to obtain civil rights, rabid racists set fire to their houses, torture and brutally murder innocent people, organise lynching parties, and make bomb attacks on Negro premises. Instead of combatting the racists, the authorities put thousands of Negroes struggling for civil rights into prisons and behind barbed wire enclosures, set dogs on them and beat them up. While widely proclaiming personal freedom, the USA is, in fact, violating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of November 20, 1963, and several other UN documents.

The anti-humanitarianism of modern capitalism is also expressed in the fact that it *blocks the intellectual development of the working people and warps man's spiritual world*. Suffice it to note that there are still over a thousand million illiterate people in the capitalist world. Moreover, many millions of these are to be found in the highly developed capitalist countries and that an overall majority are even unable to receive a secondary education.

Clear evidence of the social ugliness of man's spiritual world under capitalism is the *disastrous growth of crime*. In the United States, Britain and certain other capitalist countries, this has already become a major social problem.

According to *United States News and World Report*, the crime rate in the USA has been rising over the last years nine times as fast as the population. In 1967, for example, there were 3,750,000 serious crimes committed, seven every minute, or one every 8.5 seconds.

Congressman W. Poff declared that murder in the streets of America's cities had become an epidemic, rape an ordinary occurrence and robberies so frequent that they no longer arouse any interest.

However hard official propaganda tries to cover up the causes of crime, it is becoming increasingly clear that they are rooted in social conditions. Typical in this respect was a statement by the District Attorney for Los Angeles County E. J. Younger, a member of the President's crime commission, who told correspondents from *United States News and World Report* that the elimination of crime de-



pendent on the elimination of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment.<sup>1</sup>

Progressives the world over have long been voicing alarm over the moral crisis of bourgeois society and bourgeois ideology. This crisis has been examined in numerous books and articles by Soviet philosophers and literary and art critics, as well as in works by progressive foreign authors which analyse contemporary bourgeois ethics, literature and art. This being so, we only intend to touch on the subject in the most general terms here, in so far as it has a bearing on the question of the relationship between scientific and technological progress and the moral development of bourgeois society.

Concern over the profound ideological crisis, the absence of moral ideals capable of inspiring people in the capitalist world is the theme of the articles by such outstanding figures in the USA as Adlai Stevenson, Billy Graham, Walter Lippmann and many others that appeared in *Life* magazine as part of a debate on America's national purpose and later published in book form. "The critical weakness of our society," J. K. Jessup wrote, quoting Lippmann, "is that for the time being our people do not have great purposes which they are united in wanting to achieve."<sup>2</sup> "...Regardless of the outward appearance of prosperity within the corporate life of America today there is present a form of moral and spiritual cancer which could ultimately lead to the country's destruction unless the disease is treated promptly. ..." is Billy Graham's verdict.<sup>4</sup>

Many authors, however, while recognising the impasse

<sup>1</sup> See *Pravda*, February 11, 1968.

<sup>2</sup> J. K. Jessup, *A Noble Framework for a Great Debate*. In: *The National Purpose. America in Crisis: an Urgent Summons*, New York, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> In this connection the following statistics for the growth of drug addiction, prostitution and suicide among American young people are of considerable interest. "At least once a minute somebody in the USA tries to commit suicide. Suicide is one of the ten most common causes of death in the USA. Twenty thousand people deliberately take their own life every year, and for every registered suicide case there are nine unsuccessful attempts. ... As a cause of death suicide holds third place for teenagers in general, second place for students and first place for post-graduate students. According to statistics quoted in the press, drug addiction has long since become an extremely profitable business.

that the so-called "free world" has reached, either fail to see or refuse to admit that the crisis has definite objective causes, and try to create the illusion that it is attributable to the absence of ideas and insufficient flexibility in propaganda. In actual fact, this spiritual crisis is ultimately determined by the nature of capitalism, by the general crisis capitalist society is experiencing. After all, one can hardly ignore the connection between the absence of ideals, the low level of moral and spiritual development of a large part of America's youth and the fact that millions of people are in a desperate situation through mass unemployment. S. Ryerson writes: "First, young people confronting closed doors of places of higher learning; then, the closed doors of places of employment. Those under 25 make up one-fifth of the American labour force, but more than a third of the unemployed. 'People without a future', 'the new lost generation', the *New York Times Magazine* (May 24, 1964) called them. A *closed future* for a large part of an entire young generation: this, in an *open society*?"<sup>1</sup>

Herbert Aptheker writes in his critical study of racism: "In our more secular era, 'scientific' myths have greater influence in bulwarking the whole moonlight and magnolia fabrication than do the theological. These myths fall into historical, anatomical, anthropological, and psychological categories; all of them were strongly reinforced in our country by a misreading of Darwinism to justify political backwardness, moral ferocity, avid acquisitiveness, and social injustice."<sup>2</sup>

Bourgeois ideologists regard propaganda of anti-communist and anti-humanitarian ideas as an expression of freedom, ignoring the tragic fact that such "freedom" turns against people, stifling all that is noble in them, that it is really soul-destroying.

Despite the fact that in some states the penalty for dope peddling is thirty years' imprisonment, the American mafia is stepping up drug traffic considerably. It has been estimated by American organisations that millions of people are on drugs. There are about four million LSD addicts. According to *Look* magazine, drug users "are usually younger, more intelligent, better educated and from the so-called privileged classes". (*Look*, August 8, 1967, p. 17).

<sup>1</sup> S. Ryerson, *The Open Society, Paradox and Challenge*, New York, 1965, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Aptheker, *The Negro Today*, New York, 1962, p. 5.

The moral crisis of bourgeois society is expressed in the excessive inflation of *egoism and individualism* as the basis of bourgeois ethics. Of course at one time, in the period of emergence and growth of capitalism, these moral principles were progressive since they were bound up with man's emancipation from the fetters of religious-ascetic ideology. As capitalism developed, however, they gradually came to acquire the form of zoological individualism, the subordination of everything, including people's health and life, to selfish profit-making.<sup>1</sup>

Business interests decide everything in the capitalist world; the interests of millions of people, their freedom and rights are all subordinated to the interests of business. In the pursuit of superprofits, the imperialist reactionaries do their best to promote moral corruption, especially of young people, in every way imaginable. All the mass media—the cinema, television, the press—are used to spread among young people, even small children, a spirit of militarism, racism, violence and cruelty, and laws based on social Darwinism. In some cases this produces a cynical attitude to life, to other people, and to humanitarian ideals, in others it leads to ambivalence.

It is therefore no accident that many bourgeois sociologists and ethicists have declared that there is a conflict between scientific and technological progress and mankind's moral development. Thus, the British sociologist H. Hawton writes that many sociologists regard the very idea of progress as a myth, and that according to them, "... no sort of optimism is possible, in view of the grim facts.... Men are not naturally good and kindly, still less are they rational. It is folly to attempt to influence their conduct by

<sup>1</sup> Take for example, the thalidomide tragedy, resulting from the use of a sedative produced in the mid-fifties by the West German firm Distillers Company. Launched on the market without sufficiently thorough study of its effects, it was advertised as a "wonder drug", and achieved enormous sales. In the FRG alone fifteen million pills were taken every month. Thalidomide continued to be advertised even after the dangerous effects had become known—the possibility of children being born with terrible deformities—without legs or arms, and with other serious bodily defects—when taken during pregnancy. Incomplete estimates suggest that 10,000 deformed children were born in Scandinavia and between 500 and 800 in Britain, of which only 225 survived.

reason. It is in vain to expect science to save us; manifestly it is about to destroy us.... We must therefore turn our backs on science and reason and all vain human hopes, for we have entered the Age of Despair."<sup>1</sup>

Although there are ample grounds for such scepticism, the idea that there is inevitably antagonism between scientific and technological progress and mankind's moral development, and indeed this whole concept of moral progress in the present age, is quite unwarranted. One cannot regard phenomena that express the crisis of bourgeois morality as typical of the nuclear age as a whole and universalise them. It is just as much a mistake of principle to automatically identify scientific and technological progress with moral progress. The latter has a relatively independent development, being related above all to social processes, and is especially complex and contradictory in the present age. When speaking of moral processes within the framework of American society we must bear in mind that very different people are involved. Some Americans burn down Vietnamese villages with napalm, beat up and torture civilians and use poison gas on people, while others actively oppose the war in Vietnam, burn their draft cards and serve prison sentences for their anti-war activities. Some scientists, such as Teller, refuse to accept any responsibility for what happens to the world, on the grounds that it does not concern them and their job is simply to get on with their studies, while others stand shoulder to shoulder with progressive intellectuals in the struggle for peace. Some American workers are indifferent to the war, satisfied that it provides them with employment, quite undismayed by the fact that this is only at the price of the blood and death of thousands of innocent victims, whereas others join an unequal battle against armed police and troops, making the streets of America's cities an arena of struggle against social injustice and imperialist barbarity. There are many such conflicts, and they all express the contradictions of present-day bourgeois society, the moral crisis of capitalism, the contradictory nature of moral progress. It would be foolish to underestimate this crisis. However, dangerous though it

<sup>1</sup> H. Hawton, *The Feast of Unreason*, London, 1952, p. 4.



is, it is certainly not decisive for the present stage of human development.

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The antihumane essence of modern capitalism is especially evident in its attempts to maintain *colonial enslavement* by all and any means.

It is common knowledge that the age we live in is marked by the collapse of the colonial system. The vast majority of the erstwhile colonial countries—India, Burma, Ceylon, Egypt, Iraq, Guinea, Algeria and many others—have gained independence and are at present successfully developing along a new path, despite all the difficulties involved. In all, about seventy countries with a total population of some 1,500 million have gained independence since 1945. But colonialism has not been completely eradicated, and 35 million people still live under its heavy yoke. All these people and those who have now gained independence suffered monstrous exploitation and bondage at the hands of world imperialism. Hunger, poverty, disease, lack of education and other products of colonial bondage were their constant and only lot. All this, irrespective of sex and age, was supplemented by monstrous racial discrimination and complete absence of civil rights for the working masses.

In some still remaining colonies and semi-colonies the "colour bar" exists, whereby the indigenous population are deprived of the basic human rights. There are no limits to humiliation to which the natives are subjected. They are barred cinemas, theatres, restaurants, libraries and other public places. In stores and fine blocks of flats they are allowed to use only special lifts with the notice "For natives and dogs". Many colonies have a pass system, whereby the indigenous population are only permitted to travel about their own country provided they are in possession of a special pass. Apart from a receipt to show that he has paid his taxes, the native is required to carry on him and present whenever a policeman requires a permit entitling him to look for work, visit relatives, a work permit, permits for stays in various parts of the country, for going out in the evening, etc.

In the British colonies in Africa, for example, slavery and forced labour existed until very recently. In the

Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique and in certain other colonies and semi-colonies, they are still practised today. To unbearable working conditions are added punitive expeditions, discrimination in housing, the health service and wages, monstrous taxes and other forms of exploitation and plunder of the poverty-stricken population.

Consequently, and especially as a result of malnutrition and insanitary conditions (a vast number of people still live on reservations, in huts built of straw, tin cans and other packing materials) the majority of the population of the colonial and semi-colonial countries suffer from various serious diseases, particularly tuberculosis, and life expectancy is low, about half what it is in the metropolitan countries. The infant mortality rate in Africa is appallingly high. It is worth noting that the population of the Congo halved in the fifty years of Belgian domination. Adult illiteracy still stands at over 80 per cent in Africa and over 40 per cent in Latin America.

The former Portuguese military governor of the Mukoso district (Angola) admitted that the indigenous population was no better fed than a hundred years ago, and that living conditions and the cultural level had not improved in the slightest. Human dignity had suffered even more.

In South Africa apartheid flourishes. Monopoly capital of the USA, Britain, and other capitalist countries exploits the country's vast economic wealth and lends every support to its fascist dictatorship. The bulk of the population are reduced to the position of slaves and are mercilessly exploited.

As in the past, imperialism continues to have need of the colonial system, which is very much to its advantage, and does everything in its power to preserve it—by means of wars, punitive expeditions, military and secret means, prisons and concentration camps. In order to retain its sway over the countries which have thrown off the imperialist yoke, imperialism generally resorts to new forms of colonialism. Adapting itself to the new conditions that have emerged as a result of the great scope the national liberation movement has acquired, imperialist circles are constantly changing their tactics, making wide use of the puppet governments they have installed in various countries, and

continually organising counter-revolutionary coups, supporting unpopular military dictatorships and all the internal forces of reaction, arming them, and in fact engaging in the export of counter-revolution.

With a view to splitting the national liberation movement and preserving the system of colonialism, the imperialists resort not only to military-political actions, but spend vast sums, taking advantage of the numerous difficulties facing the national states, their economic backwardness, and speculating on the instability and contradictions of the national revolutions. It is thus perfectly clear and natural that struggle against the colonial policy of contemporary imperialism, resolute support for the national liberation movement, for all its progressive forces and currents, full and complete abolition of colonial regimes, of various forms of colonialism and neo-colonialism, is one of the most important problems of humanism today, a fundamental condition for a solution to the question of the individual.

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A most vivid expression of capitalism's inhumanity and hostility to the interests of the masses are the imperialist wars of acquisition it embarks on, the efforts of imperialist reaction to use the great achievements of the human intellect for the purpose of mass destruction of human life.

From the time of the first war of the imperialist age, launched by the USA in 1898, imperialism has continually been inflicting "local wars" on the peoples, and has twice plunged mankind into the holocaust of world war. These wars claimed 80 million victims! The Second World War alone took almost 50 million lives. In the course of these wars whole countries were laid waste, thousands of towns and villages were destroyed, as well as countless material and spiritual values created by many generations of people.

During the Second World War fascism committed a crime against humanity: genocide, the attempt to exterminate whole nations and peoples—the Poles, Czechs, Jews, etc. The International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg established that over four million people perished in the

Auschwitz death camp alone, and at another camp, Majdanek, about one and a half million people died in the gas chambers or before firing squads.

Only the total defeat of German fascism prevented its ally, imperialist Japan, from proceeding to the mass destruction of human life with bacteriological weapons. But such weapons were soon to be used by the American military in the war against the Korean and Chinese peoples. American aircraft dropped bombs with insects—mosquitoes, flies and spiders—infected with lethal plague, typhoid and cholera bacteria on the territory of Korea and North-East China.

A Committee of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers investigating the crimes of the American aggressors in Korea and North-East China in March and April 1952, decided that the mass killings caused by the use of bacteriological weapons against the peace-loving Korean people represented an attempt to destroy all or part of that people.

For the imperialist vultures war has become simply a means of making high profits. During the First World War the profits of the American imperialists amounted to 28,000 million dollars; in the Second World War, as much as 114,000 million dollars.

As L. I. Brezhnev noted in his speech at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties: "Militarism has always been part and parcel of imperialism. But today it has acquired truly unparalleled proportions. It is the fault of imperialism that the labour of many millions of people, the brilliant achievements of the human intellect, of the talent of scientists, researchers and engineers, are used not for the benefit of mankind, for promoting progress and the remaking of life on earth, but for barbarous, reactionary purposes, for the needs of war, the greatest of calamities for the peoples."<sup>1</sup>

In the sixties alone, the USA and other imperialist countries have launched armed assaults on Vietnam, Cuba, Panama, the Dominican Republic, the Arab countries, Laos and Cambodia.

The appeal of the International Meeting of Communist

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969, Prague, 1969, p. 143.*



and Workers' Parties, "Independence, Freedom and Peace for Vietnam!" contains the following passage. "The barbarous crimes of the US interventionists against the Vietnamese people, the use of biological, chemical and other means of mass annihilation, which is nothing less than genocide, outrage the conscience of mankind. This has revealed to all the peoples the true, anti-human essence of imperialism."<sup>1</sup>

At no time has world war represented such a serious threat to mankind as in our age of scientific and technological progress.

It would have seemed that the brilliant achievements of the human intellect in putting atomic energy to use open up boundless prospects for the growth of the productive forces and the development of vast hitherto unused areas of the globe with a view to improving people's living conditions, enriching man's life, etc. But these objective opportunities for the peaceful use of atomic energy are hampered by capitalist relations. Nuclear energy is being widely used above all for stockpiling, mass nuclear tests, poisoning the air, the ground and the water, condemning a large number of people to cancer, leukaemia and other diseases, to atrocious suffering and death. Atomic reactors are being used to power US submarines, patrolling the world's seas for military purposes.

The creation of nuclear missile weaponry brought about a fundamental qualitative change in the nature of war and the means by which it is waged.

According to the specialists, for several years now there have been bombs with a power of up to 100 megatons. In order to give an idea of what this really means, it should be remembered that the first five megaton nuclear bomb exploded by the Americans produced an explosion almost twice as powerful as all the explosives used in the Second World War. A 100 megaton bomb is probably about five thousand times as powerful as the atom bomb the Americans dropped on Hiroshima. It is calculated that it could destroy in one blast everything within a radius of 25-40 kilometres, or in an area of four to five thousand square kilometres. A thermo-nuclear war could cost between 800 million and one

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

billion human lives. Moreover, hundreds of millions would be killed by radioactive fall-out (strontium 90, caesium 137, etc.), which is dangerous not only to the health of living people but also to future generations.

Quite apart from all this, the preparation for war in present conditions involves deprivations and sufferings for millions of people. It is an especially heavy burden for the working people, entailing rising taxation, inflation and growth of the cost of living.

Military expenditure in the capitalist countries, and above all in the USA, is growing at an unprecedented pace. An article by Herbert Aptheker which appeared in *Political Affairs* in September 1967 noted that the fact that in the previous twenty years over 57 per cent of the US national budget had been spent on war or military preparations, and only 6 per cent had been devoted to social services clearly reflected the complete inhumanity of the present social system of the United States. In the period of 1946-1969, US direct military expenditure amounted to 1,100 million dollars (in prices of 1957-1959), which more than twice exceeds this country's military expenditure throughout its history till 1945, including the First and Second World wars.<sup>1</sup>

In analysing the socio-political essence of the anti-humanism of the contemporary capitalist world, we are deliberately devoting most of our attention to the United States, since this is the most developed and richest of the capitalist countries, a country which bourgeois propaganda declares to be a country of "general affluence".

The facts show that the United States, the most vivid and full embodiment of contemporary imperialism, represents a constant threat to world peace, a threat to the lives of millions of people and the existence of whole nations.

All these questions, which directly affect the interests of the working class and the working masses in the capitalist countries, the interests of the peoples and all mankind, naturally determine the content of the problem of humanism in our time, affecting its socio-political essence.

In class society the problem of humanism has always been

<sup>1</sup> *The International Year-Book, Politics and Economics*, Moscow, 1971, p. 14 (in Russian).

socio-political in essence, since its content depends on certain concrete historical conditions. Humanism is also socio-political in essence in socialist society, where social antagonisms have been abolished along with exploiting classes and the exploitation of man by man. But here the essence acquires a different quality, and therefore requires a special analysis.<sup>1</sup>

Our analysis has shown that at the present stage of mankind's development the socio-political content of humanism as a whole is determined by the social processes taking place and by scientific and technological progress. In this connection, it should be stressed once more that the most vital and urgent problem of humanism today is that of preventing thermonuclear war and banishing world war from the life of mankind. Consequently, in our day and age the problem of humanism is interwoven with the international problems of war and peace, the problem of halting imperialist aggression in Indochina and the Middle East, the problem of eradicating the last vestiges of colonialism.

The CC report to the 24th CPSU Congress emphasised: "The UN decisions on the abolition of the remaining colonial regimes must be fully carried out. Manifestations of racism and apartheid must be universally condemned and boycotted."<sup>2</sup> Today questions of humanism cannot be examined and solved without reference to the universal problem of war and peace, that vital and primarily socio-political problem of the age, expressing mankind's common interest.

## 2. Contemporary Ideological Struggle Over the Essence of Humanism

The conflicting theories that compete as part of the contemporary ideological struggle in questions of humanism ultimately proceed from different interpretations of the essence of humanism. For many years representatives of various bourgeois philosophical currents have tried to reduce human-

<sup>1</sup> Such an analysis is to be found in the final chapter of the present work.

<sup>2</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Documents, Moscow, 1971, p. 38.

ism to psychological, abstract-ethical, religious and other purely spiritual questions. Thus, the representatives of the psychological trend in bourgeois sociology regard individual psychology as the root of the matter. Examining individual psychology divorced from material and social relations and the objective processes of historical development, they have sought the answer to questions of humanism in congenital biological qualities and instincts. This approach, which is most fully expressed in the writings of Freud and his followers, such as A. Gehlen, fails to reveal the true causes of the social phenomena associated with humanism, and only leads at best to abstract propaganda of the need for psychological self-perfection.

Objective idealists of various trends, among them the personalists, Christian existentialists and neo-Thomists, oppose the Marxist-Leninist view of humanism from what, despite differences, is ultimately a religious-idealist, mystical standpoint. The American personalists Hocking, Brightman and Flewelling and, in a somewhat different manner, the French personalists Lacroix, Nédoncelle and Lundberg, when discussing humanism and personal freedom are really defending religious dogmas in philosophical guise. "Yet to fix our mind upon the human interest is to lose the best things that have come to mankind..." Hocking writes. "Consider him (a man—*Ed.*) as a group of impulses tending forward to a will to be immortal, and you find material interests taken care of as incidents. Humanism can be fulfilled only in a world that sustains the zest of doing one's human job as a religious observance."<sup>1</sup> Hocking and the other personalists make what amounts to an appeal for "self-forgetfulness in the service of God".

It is clear from statements we have already examined that the personalist and Marxist-Leninist concepts of humanism are diametrically opposed. The personalist concept is also fundamentally different from that of the progressive bourgeois humanism of the past, which developed in protest against the religious-idealist asceticism of the Middle Ages, affirming earthly joys and the need to accord the individual real rights and freedoms. Personalism and kindred objective-

<sup>1</sup> W. Hocking, *Types of Philosophy*, New York, 1959, pp. 507-508.



idealist trends have broken with these progressive ideas and widely propagate the principles of religious humanism, a bankrupt pseudo-humanism.

We completely agree with Academician Gulian's definition of personalism. "Personalism (the Americans Flewelling and Brightman, the Frenchmen Mounier and Lacroix) as a conception is torn by inner contradictions: the person embraces the whole universal and at the same time meekly sits down at the feet of the deity. In all the different versions of personalism there is one basic thesis, that 'the universal is an association of "Egos" or persons, interrelated, with the deity as the central figure engendering them'."<sup>1</sup>

Even the representatives of modern Christian ideology are themselves forced to admit the crisis of religious humanism. Typical in this respect is Nikolai Berdyayev's article "Old and New Paths of Humanism", published in a Basel University journal in 1946. The article is interesting in that it not only reveals the untenability of traditional Christian humanism but reveals a search by supporters of the Church for new means of influencing the masses. Attempting to lead the masses away from struggle for real freedoms and rights, Berdyayev claimed that humanism, and hence human dignity can only be reborn from the religious depths. "The question of man's creative calling," he wrote, "is a question of the *new* Christian mind. Only on this basis can the problem of humanism be posed in a new manner."<sup>2</sup>

It is not difficult to observe that the whole "novelty" of Berdyayev's theory consisted in upholding the ancient Christian humanism with the aid of personalist-existentialist arguments.

Another clear example of the crisis of Christian humanism is the teaching of the famous paleontologist and active champion of Catholicism, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. His book *The Phenomenon of Man* is a hymn to man and his intelligence and the collective strength of mankind, and strongly condemns individualism and reaction, demanding that man should assume full responsibility for his present

<sup>1</sup> C. Gulian, *Problematica omului*, Editura Politica, Bucuresti, 1966, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> N. Berdjajew, "Alte und neue Wege des Humanismus", *Theologische Zeitschrift*, Basel, März-April, 1946, S. 129-30.

and future. He was highly critical of the theories of the absurd and despair, and fascist nihilism. As was reasonably to be expected, the forces of reaction were so alarmed at his hatred for reaction, his bold, determined condemnation of fascism and social enslavement, his faith in the progress of mankind and the individual, the power of science and the human intellect, his support for the ideas of democratic humanism and his statements against the danger of war, colonialism and racism, that they immediately dubbed the learned theologian a Marxist! The Vatican took up arms against him. His books were put on the Index.

In actual fact, far from being a Marxist, de Chardin did not even understand Marxism. Thus, he alleged that Marxism "deprives man of his future", that it sees the welfare of mankind purely in accumulation of human creations, and not in the enrichment of man's own essence. He did not understand the laws of social development, and his theory of humanism, unlike the Marxist theory, was based on the idea of Christian love stretched to absurd lengths. He misunderstood and rejected the real essence of communism, and thought he could defeat it with the ideas of Christ, by propagandising obsolete abstract humanitarianism as the chief motive force of hominisation.

"The only way to defeat communism," he wrote in a letter of April 22, 1954, "is to present Christ as he ought to be: not as opium (or a sedative), but as the prime mover of hominisation, which can only be energetically accomplished in an open world."<sup>1</sup>

De Chardin viewed the social problems of the age from a biological standpoint and treated all acute socio-political problems, including war, accordingly.

Under the impact of world developments some bourgeois philosophers are writing more and more often about the untenability and even political imprudence of contrasting humanism and social problems. Interesting in this respect are the articles "Social Science and Humanism" and "Humanism and the Social Sciences: But What About John de Neushom?" by American sociologists Leo Strauss and James Cate respectively, included in a book published by

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Roger Garaudy in *Perspectives de l'homme*, Paris, 1959, p. 198.

the University of Chicago in 1955 to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of its Social Science Research Building, Compagnolo Umberto's article "Humanism as the Policy of Culture" and Stuart Carter Dodd's article "Can We Be Scientific About Humanism?"

"We all know the scientist who despises or ignores humanism, and the humanist who despises or ignores science," writes Strauss.<sup>1</sup> Considering the necessity of eliminating the gulf between science and humanism, he continues: "...to treat social science in a humanistic spirit means to return from the abstractions or constructs of scientific social science to social reality, to look at social phenomena primarily in the perspective of the citizen and the statesman, and then in the perspective of the citizen of the world, in the two-fold meaning of 'world': the whole human race and the all-embracing whole."<sup>2</sup>

The idea that humanism and social problems and social science must be connected is progressive, expressing the bankruptcy of abstract-ethical, religious-idealist conceptions of humanism and reflecting a more sober assessment of the matter. Various statements by a number of other bourgeois ideologists are interesting in this respect, especially those made by some of the people from the world of culture who took part in the debate on humanism held on the pages of the journal *Comprendre*, published by the European Culture Society in Venice. It is noteworthy that a number of articles stressed the idea that the struggle for peace and social progress and the abolition of social and national bondage is the chief task of humanism in our day and age. Also significant were the statements to the effect that contemporary humanism differs from classical humanism in its social orientation, that "the humanism we need today will lay particular stress on the social aspect of man".<sup>3</sup>

However, recognition of a problem does not mean that it has been solved. For bourgeois ideologists as a rule do not depart from idealism in their interpretation of the concept "social", or of *social sciences* and *sociology*. This can easily

<sup>1</sup> L. Strauss, *The State of the Social Sciences*, Chicago, 1955, p. 415.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 420.

<sup>3</sup> See *Review of the History of World Culture*, No. 4, 1957, pp. 201-13 (in Russian).

be seen from analysing some of the articles contained in the afore-mentioned publication *The State of the Social Sciences*. If one analyses the problem of humanism from such standpoints, one has little chance of getting away from abstract ethical and psychological conceptions. Thus, Strauss in his article, after insisting on the importance of humanism as a subject of social science, launches into the following abstract reflections: "The kind of humanism to which I now turn designates itself as relativistic. It may be called a humanism for two reasons. First it holds that the social sciences cannot be modelled on the natural sciences, because the social sciences deal with man. Second, it is animated, as it were, by nothing except openness for everything that is human."<sup>1</sup> Clearly, such an inaccurate and vague definition does not, and indeed cannot, advance our understanding of the social essence of humanism.

The American positivist Stuart Carter Dodd in his article "Can We Be Scientific about Humanism?" answers this much-debated question in the affirmative. He advocates "demoscopes" or pollings, which in his opinion can reveal people's needs or behaviour, their material conditions or aspirations.<sup>2</sup> In our view, pollings, however efficient the techniques employed, are clearly inadequate as a form of scientific analysis.

One does not need a "demoscope" to reveal that millions of unemployed in the United States, Britain, France, Italy and other capitalist countries want the complete and final elimination of unemployment, that masses of homeless people want a fundamental solution to the housing problem, that Negroes want equality with the Whites and have a right to respect for their human dignity, that only a handful of warmongers have an interest in war, while the rest of mankind desires peace and an end to nuclear tests that are harmful to people's health, and that the peoples of the colonial countries long for an end to colonialism and are doing their utmost to achieve it.

It is perfectly clear that humanism is not only compatible with science, but is impossible without it.

<sup>1</sup> L. Strauss, *The State of the Social Sciences*, Chicago, 1955, p. 421.

<sup>2</sup> Published in *The Humanist*, No. 5, 1958, Yellow Springs, Ohio, p. 260.



These admissions of the connection between humanism and social problems reflect the advances that have been made in bourgeois ideology in recent years under the impact of tremendous change and development in the world at large.

In view of the exacerbation of the general crisis of capitalism, the sharpening of its contradictions, the threat of nuclear war, the collapse of colonialism and the growth of the self-awareness and political activity of the masses, it is no longer possible to ignore the socio-political content of humanism. Bourgeois philosophers are beginning to pay more and more attention to the relationship between the individual and society. Many of them, especially the positivists, are focussing their attention not only on the role of outstanding personalities but on various groups of people, the conditions in which they live and work. Such concepts as "the man-in-the-street", "your average man" and so on, are appearing more and more frequently in the works of bourgeois philosophers and sociologists. More often than not this is simply a formal tribute to the time and does not represent any essential change in the content of bourgeois sociology. Many contemporary bourgeois sociologists, particularly those subscribing to various kinds of neo-positivist views, substitute the concept of *sub-culture*, the *environment* in which a particular individual lives, for the concept of society, ignoring the question of the economic basis of society, the nature of ruling social relations, and denying that there are any objective historically-conditioned tendencies of social development.

Even sociologists who are far from being Marxists point out the inadequacy of neo-positivist theories for understanding the changes and processes taking place in the world, and hence the questions relating to the individual. The book *The Sociological Imagination* by the famous American sociologist C. W. Mills is of interest in this respect.

Criticising the principles of empirical sociology, Mills writes that in these terms "the idea of conflict cannot effectively be formulated. Structural antagonisms, large-scale revolts, revolutions—they cannot be imagined. In fact, it is assumed that 'the system', once established, is not only stable but intrinsically harmonious. . . .

"The magical elimination of conflict, and the wondrous achievement of harmony, remove from this 'systematic' and

'general' theory the possibilities of dealing with social change, with history."<sup>1</sup>

The growing influence of Marxist ideas, and in particular the ideas of socialist humanism, among the working people in the capitalist countries, is forcing the most sober-minded and cautious bourgeois authors to change from frontal attack on Marxism and Marxist humanism to more subtle forms of struggle with them, to toying with Marxism and adopting its more popular theses. Some are beginning to speak of humanism as the most important social problem of our time, others call attention to the need to recognise the "value of the working man" and "respect labour", others advance the views of "economic humanism", yet others propound the theory of "human relations" and so on.

This evolution in the development of contemporary Western theories of humanism is significant. It clearly shows the profound crisis of bourgeois ideology and bourgeois humanism. However, this naturally does not mean that the idealist, abstract-ethical conceptions are being abandoned. As a rule it is simply a kind of mimicry, accommodation to the contemporary conditions of the class struggle, to the struggle for the masses in the face of the growing international influence of the world socialist system.

The ideologists of imperialism are being forced to write more and more frequently about crises, unemployment, poverty, hunger, the growth of crime, personal spiritual degradation and other acute social problems of bourgeois society. Thus, J. Maritain, writing in defence of the effete principles of Christian humanism in his article "The Humanism of St. Thomas Aquinas", admitted that a minimal degree of security was necessary for the development of a sense of human dignity, and that the question of ethics and humanism was first and foremost a question of work and bread.<sup>2</sup> That was in 1947. Since then social problems have intensified and the awareness of the masses has grown tremendously, so that it is now extremely difficult to enlist their enthusiasm for abstract ideas of happiness in the next world.

<sup>1</sup> C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, New York, 1959, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> See J. Maritain, "The Humanism of St. Thomas Aquinas", *Twentieth Century Philosophy*, New York, 1947.

Some bourgeois ideologists have recently been presenting socio-economic problems as the fundamental principle of humanism. This has found expression, for example, in the so-called theory of "economic humanism" and to some extent in the theory of "human relations".

The former theory is widely propagated in a spate of books, articles and pamphlets.

The fact that bourgeois ideologists finally admit the important role of material welfare is highly symptomatic, reflecting the crisis of the conception of humanism as a purely spiritual problem. But capitalism is by its very nature incapable of solving the issue of material welfare for all members of society.

Even if we abstract from reality and allow that this is possible, this still does not exhaust the whole problem of humanism. Humanism implies the achievement of all-round physical and spiritual, including moral, development for society as a whole and all its members individually. Practice shows that capitalist social relations and ideology fail to ensure such development. Spiritual development does not automatically follow from the economic level of society. This is expressed in the crisis of bourgeois ideology, which even the representatives of "Western civilisation", leading statesmen and public figures in the USA are compelled to admit.

It is significant that decadence, especially among the young, is to be observed in a country like Sweden, which has a high standard of living. So serious has this problem become that the Social-Democratic Party felt obliged to mention it in its draft programme. Personal fulfilment is only possible as all-round development—physical, intellectual, cultural, ideological, political, moral, aesthetic and so on. This many-sided process is determined not only by people's material position, but by other social relations and laws which are alien to capitalist society, by the creative activity of the masses.

In this connection the following passage from the article "Marxism and Human Dignity" published in *Die Zukunft* magazine is worthy of attention. "... Marxist criticism of capitalism has never been limited to material impoverishment of the masses. ... The capitalist system is regarded as a system unworthy of man because it is incapable of putting an end to the disgrace of class division and eliminating the

alienation between the producer and production. Class society and free, creative expression of man's abilities are mutually exclusive. This fundamental tenet of Marxism retains its validity despite higher wages and increased sales of cars, televisions and refrigerators. Human dignity, according to the Marxists, is only restored when the values man produces lose the quality of fetishism."<sup>1</sup>

The persistent attempts of champions of "economic humanism" to demonstrate personal fulfilment by reference to the number of cars, televisions and refrigerators being bought for cash or on the hire-purchase can only raise a smile. To be perfectly just it must be said that the opponents of Marxism themselves realise this.

In discussing the subject of the socio-political essence of humanism, a word must be said about the "ethical humanism" expressed in the principles and activities of the International Humanist and Ethical Union, representing similar unions and societies in a number of capitalist countries. Their members include progressive intellectuals—scientists and scholars, university teachers and so on—many of whom have become disillusioned with abstract bourgeois humanism and are seeking the answers to the social problems that are of vital concern to mankind today.

What are the principles of the union, which has official UNESCO status? How do the members of this broad international movement understand the essence of humanism?

The Declaration passed by the union in 1952 maintains that ethical humanism is democratic and its aim is the full, all-round development of every individual, that the ultimate aim is personal freedom which must be combined with social responsibility.

The Declaration also stresses the need for science to be used in the interests of human welfare and humaneness, for constructive rather than destructive purposes. Although the union proclaimed complete freedom of philosophic and ideological principles and unites representatives of various trends, the philosophical credo of its conception of humanism as a whole, as expressed by its Chairman Doctor Van Praag, may be summarised briefly as follows: I know that the world

<sup>1</sup> *Die Zukunft*, No. 11, 1959, S. 308.



exists and that I exist. My thought is a phenomenon of the world and this by no means signifies a choice in favour of positivism, or existentialism, or contemporary idealist humanism. The fact that the mind of man is a phenomenon of the world, and his mind is related to the objective world and depends on it is a fundamental factor.

The existing world is a human world. Man lives in society. The reality in which man lives and develops is the reality of social life. . . . Man participates in this reality and can influence it, be master of it: at the same time man is a function of reality, including social reality.

These ideas are directed against religious humanism, which has been sharply criticised by many of the union's theoreticians, including well-known scholars like C. Lamont. This anti-religious, atheist trend is characteristic of the union, which, unlike the theologians, employs the slogan "real humanism" borrowed from the Marxists.

However, although members of the union, including its Chairman, often write about the objective world, the conditioning influence of social life on human activity and development, relations with the objective world determining man's awareness, and the active role of man, their conception of man and society is essentially abstract idealist. It ignores real social relations and ties, ignores class antagonisms. Thus, Van Praag insists that man is simply "a sensorially organised spiritual structure", and consequently society is but the sum of individuals. Totally ignoring the contradiction inherent in social relations, he writes: "Although men differ from one another, the fundamental community of their sensory-spiritual organisation is the real basis for the specific human phenomenon: rational powers, will and reason enable people to communicate."<sup>1</sup>

This abstract conception of man and society is used as the logical basis for making the essence of humanism not socio-political, but ethical. The ideologists of the IHEU then treat the question of the solution of acute social problems as belonging entirely to the realm of man's spiritual, in particular, moral world, and accordingly try to limit the activities of the union to purely educational tasks.

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of International Humanist and Ethical Union*, July 1966, pp. 42, 43.

Unlike those groups of Western intellectuals that subscribe to the ideas of social pessimism, notably the existentialists, the theoreticians of "ethical humanism" write of man's creative role, the power of man's reason and will, and even discuss humanism as a form of social activity. Unfortunately, however, they reduce everything to liberal moralising and abstract faith in the importance of science and education.

Naturally, this policy cannot satisfy those progressive intellectuals who are more fully aware of the pernicious significance of such social processes as the development of neo-fascism and racism, and the wars that are repeatedly unleashed by imperialist reaction. Still less does it satisfy those progressive forces which, undeterred by repressive measures, boldly oppose imperialist policy, especially the criminal, monstrous war the USA is waging in Indochina, Israeli aggression against the Arab peoples, the perpetration of genocide against the courageous Vietnamese people, and so on.

This was reflected in the sharp debate on the pages of the magazine *International Humanist* immediately prior to the Fourth IHEU Congress, and also in the clashes and contradictions that followed at the congress itself. The issues at stake were clear the moment the debate began. What do humanists defend and what do they depend on in the social sphere? Are they simply "ameliorators" or is their search taking them in the direction of revolutionary changes? Should the humanist movement try to define its social role or is its role too general, having many meanings in the world of highly-specialised associations created for the achievement of individual goals? If the role of the humanists is defined, it is bound to serve as a model for co-ordinated activities in the educational sphere as well as in the "political", practical sphere. What kind of activity should be engaged in? How should these actions and activities be co-ordinated? What should their guiding philosophy be?

As it turned out, it was *liberal moralising on the subject of concrete practical participation in politics* that dominated at the congress.<sup>1</sup> Suffice it to say that only one resolution,

<sup>1</sup> The above material on the activities of the IHEU is taken from I. G. Kichanowa's article "Ideological Positions and Principles of the International Organisations of Freedom-Thinkers and Humanists", in

condemning the American war in Vietnam, was passed unanimously.

One form of contemporary bourgeois "ethical humanism" is the "human relations" concept. Its supporters write a great deal about the need for a new humanism, a new attitude to labour and the working man, who they confess has been crushed, humiliated, depersonalised and made into a machine, and about recognising the value of the working man as an individual, respect for his human dignity, etc.

But all these fine words boil down to appeals for "paternal" and "fraternal" relations in industry, "friendship" and mutual respect between capitalist and worker. We need hardly be surprised therefore to note that monopolists, notably American millionaires and billionaires, are among the most ardent champions of this "humanist" theory.

Closer inspection reveals that the problem of equality, regarded as an issue of the greatest importance by all progressive mankind, is used by the theoreticians of American capitalism purely for the purpose of raising labour productivity and is entirely subordinated to the economic interests of the bourgeoisie. As a leading champion of the "human relations" theory, W. H. Knowles writes that the workers' insistence on a human attitude to them, the threat of communism from outside, as well as our desire to treat human beings in a humane manner has compelled us to adapt the "human concept" to the interests of effective development of free enterprise.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the new American version of contemporary bourgeois humanism is merely a supplement to the formal legal equality typical of bourgeois society, and an attempt to cover the formal equality of contract relations between employer and workers with the false idea of the capitalist's love for the workers.

The "human relations" theory focusses on the question of human relations in industry. The authors of the theory maintain that "human relations" introduced in the sphere of material production, in production relations, in relations be-

tween employer and workers, automatically extend to the whole system of capitalist social relations and have the effect of humanising them. But for all its emphasis on the decisive importance of establishing humane relations in the sphere of production, i.e. social relations, this theory, like the theory of "economic humanism" does not go beyond abstract idealist conceptions. Its aim is not to change the nature of social relations by abolishing outmoded, anachronistic private ownership relations and introducing public ownership of the means of production in their stead, or any fundamental reorganisation of production relations, but merely to "ennoble" capitalist production relations by the moral improvement of capitalist and worker alike.

Humanism occupies an important place in the writings of theorists of Right-wing social-democracy. Their books and articles are full of declarations of the need for a "new humanism". Typical in this respect is a book by the eminent Austrian Social-Democrat O. Pollak. Referring to the scientific and technological progress mankind is achieving as a result of discoveries in the field of nuclear energy, Pollak writes: "What we need at this great turning point in history is the new humanism... freer in spirit and richer in humanity".<sup>1</sup>

Pollak relates the "new humanism" to the historical task of using science in the interests of man, and the creation of a new social order. Here too however, the whole programme never goes beyond propagating the moral improvement of man in capitalist society, and the bankrupt idea of "ethical socialism". The "new" turns out to be simply yet another dose of anti-communism and an apology for capitalism.

In conclusion we can note that the authors of non-Marxian and anti-Marxist works are writing more and more often about the social content of humanism, but that many of them continue to eviscerate the problem of its socio-political essence, avoiding any drastic conclusions that in any way affect the foundations of the system of capitalist private ownership and transferring solution of the problems of humanism to the spiritual, religious, moral, and psychological sphere.

As P. N. Fedoseyev, a leading Soviet scholar on questions

From *Erasmus of Rotterdam to Bertrand Russell*, Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1969, pp. 73-74 (in Russian).

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Knowles, *Personal Management. A Human Relations Approach*, New York, 1955, p. 23.

<sup>1</sup> O. Pollak, *Der neue Humanismus. Geist und Gesellschaft an der Zeitenwende*, Europa Verlag, Wien, 1962, S. 11.



of humanism, speaking at the 13th International Philosophical Congress in Mexico in September 1963, rightly noted: "The main question history has put before people for over a century now is the question of how to proceed from the *abstract* man to the *concrete* man, how to see to it that all human beings in all countries are able to make *real* use of human rights, and satisfy and develop their needs, how to guarantee for *every single* representative of the human race respect for his personal dignity, and a life without wars, without hunger, poverty and disease".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Man and the Modern Age*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1964, p. 9 (in Russian).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### COMMUNISM: THE FULFILMENT OF GENUINE HUMANISM

Long before the victory of socialist revolution, in the period when Marxist theory was being evolved, it was realised that the full practical achievement of humanist ideals meant creating certain objective conditions for people to live in, above all material conditions.

Scientific analysis of the question therefore requires a concrete-historical approach to the matter of achieving humanist ideals in both the first and second phases of communist society.

Marx sharply criticised Lassalle's petty-bourgeois ideas of "equality" and "justice" *in general*, ideas which ignored the stages of development of communist society. "In smashing Lassalle's petty-bourgeois, vague phrases about 'equality' and 'justice' *in general*," Lenin wrote, "Marx shows the *course of development* of communist society, which is *compelled* to abolish at first *only* the 'injustice' of the means of production seized by individuals, and which is *unable* at once to eliminate the other injustice, which consists in the distribution of consumer goods 'according to the amount of labour performed' (and not according to needs)."<sup>1</sup>

Despite this perfectly clear and unambiguous statement of the matter, the ideological opponents and critics of socialism speculate on the tasks still remaining to be solved in the socialist countries, ignore the concrete-historical conditions of the development of the new society, and persist in their various attempts either to prove the "incompatibility" of humanism and communism, or to write of both as "ideal-

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 466.

istic" and "impractical". This is why they deliberately confuse the tasks of the first and second stages of communist society.

Plainly there is nothing scientific in this approach. It is absurd to expect the new socio-economic system to reveal all its advantages and creative potentialities at the initial phases of its development.

The development of communist humanism is a gradual ascending *process of development*, and, like any other process, moves in stages, which are conditioned by the different stages of development of the communist system. However, recognition of the fact that communist humanism develops by stages does not put in doubt the historic advances made towards achieving humanism and the triumph of humanity in the best and most profound meaning of the word already at the first phase of communism.

No other revolution can compare with the Great October Socialist Revolution for the scope and depth of the social transformations accomplished in the name of man and humanity. The October Revolution raised high the banner of freedom and social equality, equal rights for all peoples, peace, labour and international friendship. The practical application of the fundamental principles of Marxist-Leninist humanism meant, as everybody knows, the abolition of private ownership, and the elimination of exploiting classes and all forms of exploitation of man by man in the socialist countries. The introduction of public ownership of the means of production and economic planning in the interests of the whole of society served as the basis for ending the alienation of man and labour, social, national and racial inequality and class antagonisms, and for the consistent solution of the problem of man, the use of society's scientific and technological and cultural progress in the interests of the people. Socialism has demonstrated in practice the possibility of a new kind of social relations, co-operation and mutual assistance between free and equal individuals and peoples.

The triumph of socialism in the USSR was instrumental in emancipating not only the Soviet people. It shook the whole system of wage labour, promoted the establishment of socialism in a number of other countries, inspired hundreds of millions of people all over the globe to determined struggle against reaction, fascism, racism, colonialism and im-

perialist wars, thereby exerting a decisive influence on the course of history and the destiny of mankind. Nothing can compare with the colossal disinterested assistance the Soviet people have rendered and continue to render to peoples struggling for their national emancipation, and peoples that have already achieved it. The internationalism of the Soviet people is a most eloquent expression of socialist humanism.

Humanism, as we have already noted, is not simply a feature of the new society that is replacing capitalism; it is the very essence of that society, of its power to inspire and overcome. Contrary to all the false and slanderous assertions and pure inventions of the ideologists of the imperialist bourgeoisie, practice has clearly demonstrated *the indivisible unity of humanism with socialism and communism*, constantly developing in accordance with the tasks of the two stages of communism, which we shall examine in more detail below.

### **1. Social Basis of the Unity of the Individual and Society**

The development of man in socialist society has been analysed in recent years in various aspects by numerous Soviet and foreign Marxist scholars and groups of researchers. We are naturally bound to take into account the results of these sociological studies.

Social equality and the unity of social and personal interests it engenders are an immediate consequence of the victory of socialism. But despite the universal-historical significance of this achievement, socialism does not immediately ensure *complete* equality for *all members* of society. Such equality is only achieved through an objective, historically-conditioned process, involving the creation of the material and technological basis of communism, the gradual transformation of socialist social relations into communist social relations, and the emergence of communist conscientiousness.

The abolition of exploiter classes in the USSR and other socialist countries produced a change in the social structure and the existence of two friendly classes—the working class and the working peasantry, and also the intellectuals who emerged from the ranks of these classes and were thus truly "of the people". The social status and anatomy of these two



classes and the intelligentsia were changed. Class privileges and class exclusiveness were banished forever, and from now on a new era began in which the classes were equal as regards their social position.

Many factors played, and continue to play, a tremendous role in the emergence and development of social equality in the socialist countries. First and foremost, there was the *abolition of the antagonistic contradictions between town and country* that had been characteristic of capitalism and had persisted for centuries. Socialism produced new relations between them. The deep-going introduction of science and technology in agriculture transformed, and is continuing to alter, the nature of work, making it more industrial and creating new opportunities for the professional advancement of the workers in the countryside. In 1970, there were 3,503,000 technical workers on the collective and state farms in the USSR, machinery repair specialists, tractor, combine harvester and lorry drivers.<sup>1</sup> In 1970 there were 390,000 specialists with a secondary (vocational) training or higher education on the country's collective farms, and 431,000 working at state farms, ancillary and other farm enterprises.<sup>2</sup>

Thanks to the active policy of providing social and cultural amenities for the rural areas, the Soviet countryside now has the material-technological and socio-economic basis needed for the further improvement of the life and living conditions of the collective-farm workers. An enormous number of houses, schools, hospitals, clubs, shops and domestic service establishments have been built since the war, and great advances have been made in installing gas and electricity.

There is still much to be done in this direction, for considerable differences persist between town and country both in the socio-economic sphere and in cultural and material amenities. The electrification and mechanisation of agriculture and the wide-scale introduction of fertilisers is not yet complete, and cultural and material living standards are still below the urban level. But the existence of these and other

<sup>1</sup> See: *The Soviet Economy in 1970. Statistical Yearbook*, Moscow, 1971, p. 413 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 406.

outstanding problems does not minimise the tremendous significance of the socio-economic and cultural processes now taking place in the Soviet countryside. These processes show a tendency of the full obliteration of essential distinctions between town and country.

Another major factor of social equality has been the *elimination of the contradiction between manual and non-manual work*, the elimination of the *antagonism* between them that is characteristic of bourgeois society.

Another major achievement of socialism that is a fundamental factor of social equality is *equality of the sexes*. Lenin wrote, "in practice *not a single* bourgeois republic, even the more advanced, has granted women... and men complete equality in the eyes of the law, or delivered women from dependence on and the oppression of the male."<sup>1</sup>

The Soviet Union was the first country in history to accord women complete equality with men in all spheres of life. Soviet women make an enormous contribution to the national economy, comprising 51 per cent of the country's manual and white-collar workers, and 44 per cent of the labour force in the countryside. A large number of women are in managerial posts and positions of authority, as factory managers, engineers, shop foremen, collective-farm chairmen, team leaders, office managers, school principals, etc.

Of the gainfully employed specialists with a higher educational or vocational training in 1970, women constituted the greater part of the total of 16.8 million. In the same year, women accounted for 359,900 of the country's scientific workers, 63,800 of them having the degree of Doctor or Candidate of Science.<sup>2</sup>

The degree of equality of the sexes achieved in the USSR can be seen from the enormous role women play in the country's political life. Suffice it to mention that women account for 30.5 per cent of all deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1970, more than in all the parliaments of the capitalist countries put together. At the 1971 elections, 2,045 women were elected members of the Supreme Soviets of the Union republics and 992,636 were elected deputies of local Soviets—territory, regional, district, town

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> *The Soviet Economy in 1970*, op. cit., p. 657.

and village Soviets. The latter figures amount to 34.8 and 45.8 per cent respectively.<sup>1</sup> Women also play an enormous role in cultural life.

An important aspect of equality of the sexes in the USSR is the great success achieved in the national republics. It is common knowledge how unenviable the lot of Eastern women was before the Revolution. Y. Nasriddinova, Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet, writes: "The past was cruel oppression, complete absence of rights, humiliation, ignorance, deprivation, suffering and hardship. The cruel laws of Shariat and Adat condemned women to eternal seclusion, shut off from other people by the black veil. Women were regarded as inferior beings and could be sold as merchandise."<sup>2</sup>

In 1970, women made up 41 per cent of the gainfully employed population in Uzbekistan. Among them, about 220,000 had a higher education or vocational training, and over 8,500 were scientific workers, including dozens of Doctors of Science and professors, over 1,200 Candidates of Science working in the exact sciences as well as teaching and medicine. Oppressed and deprived of civil rights in the past, Uzbek women are today taking an active part in the public and political life of their republic and the whole of the USSR. In 1971, 38,466 women were elected to local Soviets.<sup>3</sup> A similar situation obtains in the other national republics and regions of the Soviet Union.

It must not be imagined, of course, that Soviet society has completely solved all the problems of equality of the sexes. The initiative and activity of women in production and public life and their assumption of managerial and leading state functions still falls short of actual requirements. The question of the use of female labour in production is not always decided correctly. There are still serious deficiencies in the work of cultural and domestic services and children's establishments, which is of such tremendous importance in lightening the burden of working women and giving them more time to devote to personal cultural development. The

<sup>1</sup> *Soviets of Working People's Deputies*, No. 8, 1971, p. 44 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> Y. Nasriddinova, "Notes on the Women of My Republic", *Literaturnaya gazeta*, December 10, 1969.

<sup>3</sup> *Soviets of Working People's Deputies*, No. 8, 1971, p. 45.

attention of the Communist Party and the Soviet public is focussed on these deficiencies, and steps are being taken to improve the situation, so that the problem will undoubtedly be solved in the course of the future development of society. The necessary conditions will be created to enable women to combine having a family with taking an ever greater part in production, public life, science and cultural activities.

An essential socio-political condition for complete equality for all members of society, especially in a multi-national state, is *equality of all citizens irrespective of nationality and race*. National oppression has been completely eliminated in the USSR and other socialist countries, and all peoples enjoy freedom and complete equality. While the bourgeois states are pursuing a policy of forced assimilation towards national minorities, a racist policy, socialist society has brought about a revival of peoples formerly little known or completely unheard of. In an incredibly short space of time the formerly oppressed peoples of Russia—Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tajiks, Kirghiz, Turkmenians, Bashkirs, Buryats, and many others—took a gigantic leap forward in economic, political and cultural development. This was expressed in the transformation of the backward feudal borderlands into advanced socialist republics with highly developed socialist industry and mechanised agriculture, the growth of their national statehood, and the blossoming of culture national in form and socialist in content.

A profound cultural revolution was carried out on the basis of the tremendous socio-economic and political achievements in the Central Asian and other Soviet national republics.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> To illustrate this, let us take one typical example. Before the Revolution there were no higher educational establishments in Byelorussia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Lithuania, Moldavia or Armenia, while Kirghizia, Tajikistan and Turkmenia had neither higher educational nor vocational training establishments. Today, every single Union republic has a broad network of higher educational and vocational training establishments. In the academic year 1970/71, the number of students enrolled at higher educational establishments per ten thousand inhabitants was as follows: USSR total—188; RSFSR—204; Ukrainian SSR—170; Byelorussia—154; Uzbekistan—189; Kazakhstan—152; Georgia—189; Azerbaijan—192; Lithuania—180; Moldavia—124; Latvia—171; Kirghizia—161; Tajikistan—149; Armenia—214; Turkmenia—131; Estonia—161. (*The Soviet Economy in 1970*, p. 643.)



The community of the fundamental interests of the Soviet peoples is an indisputable fact, determined by the unity of economic, political, and ideological foundations of the socialist social and state system.

The process of further erasure of class differences and the development of communist social relations that characterises the present stage is serving to increase social homogeneity of the nations, promote the development of common communist features in their culture, morality, domestic and spiritual life and strengthen mutual trust and friendship between them.

The triumph of socialist social relations provided the social basis for a new *status of the individual person*, unprecedented in the history of class societies. A person's position in society ceased to be dependent upon class, nationality or race, sex or property, and came to be based entirely on *personal labour and personal abilities*.

This is an historic achievement of humanism which working people dreamed of for centuries and still do in the capitalist countries. It has become the objective basis for a fundamentally new relationship between personal interests and the interests of society which is an exclusive feature of socialism, the objective basis for the *unity of the individual and society*, thereby refuting the idea of their eternal conflict.

But although it has eliminated social antagonisms, socialist society at this stage has not entirely overcome all vestiges of class relations. Class distinctions still persist, as do differences between town and country, manual and non-manual workers. These differences will only be eliminated following the creation of the material and technological basis of communism and the development of communist social relations.

The CPSU Programme stresses that communism will bring about *complete* social equality for *all* members of society. "Under communism there will be no classes, and the socioeconomic and cultural distinctions, and differences in living conditions, between town and countryside will disappear; the countryside will rise to the level of the town in the development of the productive forces and the nature of work, the forms of production relations, living conditions and the well-being of the population. With the victory of commu-

nism mental and physical labour will merge organically in the production activity of people. The intelligentsia will no longer be a distinct social stratum. Workers by hand will have risen in cultural and technological standards to the level of workers by brain.

"Thus, communism will put an end to the division of society into classes and social strata."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the relationship between the individual and society will cease to involve any social contradictions or be in any way influenced by class relations.

Bourgeois ideologists and the Right-wing reformists and revisionists who share their views try to distort the relationship between individual and society in the period of socialism and communism. Ignoring the objective historically-conditioned tendencies of the development of socialism and communism they speculate on certain contradictions between personal and social interests under socialism and speak of society's pressure on the individual, of personal interests being ignored in socialist society and so on.

Thus, Knoeringen declares: "Communism sees in the individual man only a part of mankind, only a part of the 'whole'. . . . Although communism preaches that its ultimate goal is the full development of the human personality and the physical and spiritual perfection of man, this will only be achieved through the transformation of man to make his interests, his will, and his happiness conform with those of the community, i.e., of the 'whole'."<sup>2</sup>

It is a fact that communism regards man as part of the whole. It could not be otherwise. Man is a social being whose life and development are determined by the social conditions in which he lives, by the social relationships in which he finds himself. It is therefore unscientific not to regard man in connection with the whole. But everything depends on the nature of that whole, for it is this which determines the relationship between the part and the whole.

The interests of society are determined by the material demands of social development, ultimately by the demands of development of the productive forces.

In antagonistic class societies the interests of society are at

<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1961, p. 510.

<sup>2</sup> *Vorwärts*, April 19, 1961.

odds with the narrow, self-centred interests of the ruling classes. This is clearly seen in the opposition of the monopolies to the use of the great achievements of science and technology in the interests of the masses—for example, the peaceful use of atomic energy, the broad international solution of the fuel and power problem and various other scientific and technological projects connected with international relations and the international division of labour that are entirely in the interests of the working masses.

In the conditions of social unity achieved under socialism quite a different relationship between the part (individual) and the whole (society) arises, which is the antithesis of the situation described above. The interests of society coincide with those of the whole people, with the basic interests of the working person as a member of a real community. It is simply a question of skilfully combining these interests so that each of the units comprising society is able to act on the correct principles.

Therefore, transforming man and inculcating in him an awareness of the unity of his personal interests and the interests of society, is a perfectly natural phenomenon, fully corresponding to man's social nature. It naturally does not follow from this that personal interests completely or invariably coincide with those of society.

It would be untrue to say that the immediate personal interests of all the people who built new towns and vast industrial and other developments in the hard conditions of the taiga and barren steppe during the building of socialism under the first five-year plans always coincided with the interests of society. It would also be naive to suppose that the need to review rates of pay and increase daily quotas in connection with the growth of labour productivity at plants and factories entirely coincides with the immediate personal interests of every individual worker. But the contradictions between the individual and society, between the interests of the individual and society, under socialism differ from those in bourgeois society in that they are *non-antagonistic*. For the reduction of rates in connection with the growth of labour productivity, the cultivation of virgin lands and the building of new towns and various other developments under socialism serve to promote the material welfare of all people, of every individual.

Another feature of the contradictions between the individual and society under socialism is that they are *partial* and can only affect certain groups of people.

While under capitalism the contradictions between the individual and society are universal and permanent and express class antagonisms, under socialism they are *temporary*, being conditioned by the insufficiently high level of development of the productive forces. It is characteristic that if a few years ago young graduates did not want to go and work in remote areas of the country, such an attitude is now extremely rare. This is due not so much to the spiritual and, in particular, moral development of the young people as to the fact that these remote areas have been transformed. Suffice it to mention Siberia, Kazakhstan and the Central Asian republics which are no longer the backward borderlands where the pioneer builders, engineers, doctors and teachers worked not so long ago.

Life demonstrates most clearly that the objective basis for contradictions between the individual and society and the sphere of their influence will gradually diminish with the development of socialist social relations and the productive forces.

\* \* \*

The new social relations between the individual and society established in the USSR, their organic unity has led to a fundamentally new *relationship between the development of the masses and personal development*. As never before the development of the masses has become the basis for personal development and, as we shall see, this development is proceeding in the USSR and other socialist countries at a pace unprecedented and unthinkable in human history.

This is the most vivid and eloquent expression of the humanitarian nature of the socialist system. The importance of this factor can be gauged from the anxiety that consequently grips modern bourgeois ideologists, who raise deafening cries about the "threat" the masses represent to the individual. This is "substantiated", in particular, in de Man's *The Era of the Masses and the Decline of Civilisation*<sup>1</sup> and many other works by apologists of the retreating class.

<sup>1</sup> H. de Man, *L'ère des masses et le déclin de la civilisation*, Paris, 1954.



The neo-Thomist I. Bochenski has declared that the purpose of existence on earth is completely free human development and expression. For "free" read "free from the masses", of course, since Bochenski, like Jaspers, de Man and many others, holds that the people cannot be carriers of the rational.

Similar ideas are characteristic of Right-wing social-democrat theories. Thus, Knoeringer writes with alarm that communism endeavours to "destroy man's individuality" and reduce man to the building stone of the community, etc.

However, life shows that communism, far from wishing to destroy man's individuality, does everything to raise the masses and all individuals to the level of highly and comprehensively developed individuality. The achievement of the aim of communist society, free and all-round development of the individual, presupposes a high level of development of the masses, of the community in which the individual lives, works and develops. "Only in community with others has each individual the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions; only in the community, therefore, is personal freedom possible."<sup>1</sup> On the level of development of the masses the wealth, and variety and fullness of human relations and a whole complex of problems depend, without which free, all-round, harmonious development of the individual is unthinkable.

All this points to the fact that the individual derives strength from being an organic part of the community, the masses, society, and the free development of the individual is the *result* of the development of society, the development of the whole people. And life shows that the further socialist society develops, the more *determinant* and decisive the role played by the development of the masses becomes.

The content of the concept "the masses" is radically transformed under socialism. The working masses are not inert but an active, creative factor. Socialism woke the inherent powers concealed in the masses and gave broad opportunities to ordinary people to reveal and develop their abilities and talents in all spheres of human activity—in work, socio-

political and cultural life. The "mass" that bourgeois ideologists treat with such scorn and at the same time fear is henceforth composed of highly gifted and many-sided individuals capable of creative thought, innovators in production and so on. The concept "the masses" under socialism represents the sum of highly-developed individuals united by a common will and awareness, with a profound understanding of the tendencies of the historical process and their active role in it. Naturally not all members of socialist society are such active individuals. There are still people—and quite a lot of them—whose personal awareness has not yet reached the general level of social awareness. But today it is not they who determine the content of the concept "the masses". The elimination of the gap and contradiction between the individual and the masses is a characteristic and historically-conditioned feature of socialism as a whole. In the course of communist construction, and eventually, with the disappearance of essential distinctions between manual and non-manual labour, the growth of the creative activity of the working people and the level of activity of the masses as a whole will rise higher and higher.

Marx and Engels prophesied this with brilliant foresight in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*: "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."<sup>1</sup>

Liberation from the social antagonisms characteristic of capitalism for the first time in history is leading to direct mutual conditioning between the free development of each individual and all members of society, the masses as a whole, between the unit and the whole. Under socialism the free creative development of each individual far from hampering actually promotes the free development of all people. This is only possible in a social system where the unity of the interests of the individual and society has triumphed. In bourgeois society these conditions for the free development of every person do not and cannot exist because of class and other social antagonisms.

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1968, p. 93.

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Moscow, 1969, Vol. I, p. 127.

Socialism abolishes the social obstacles to such development together with class antagonisms with which they are associated. A typical illustration is provided by the Armenians repatriated to the Soviet Union in the fifties and sixties from various capitalist countries. Only the odd person had a higher education, and not many of them had a complete secondary education. Today, in almost every one of these families there are several members with a higher, secondary technical or other specialised education.

While making all these claims about the suppression of the individual by the masses, bourgeois ideologists and those who subscribe to similar views omit to mention the fact that more has been done for the individual in the fifty odd years of Soviet power than was done, or could have been done, by the capitalist countries in several centuries.

Speaking of the dialectic of the development of the individual and the masses, it is essential to bear in mind their interaction and mutual influence. This mutual influence is increasing in the process of development towards communist society. Marx's thesis that the free development of each individual is the condition for the free development of all expresses this aspect of the matter, too.

## 2. Scientific and Technological Progress and Humanism in Socialist Society

The present age gives a new twist to the question of the influence of scientific and technological progress on man's personal development, man and his future, and the destiny of the peoples and world civilisation.

The social consequences of scientific and technological progress have, as we have already noted, extended the scope of the problem of humanism, imparted special urgency to the subject and posed a number of new, complex problems concerning the influence of scientific and technological progress on man. Thus, it is necessary to reconsider the question of the nature and content of labour, its physiological and psychological aspect, time spent at work, and the question of the influence of demographic processes connected with the distribution of the productive forces on the family, people's way of life and so on. All sorts of new questions and prob-

lems are constantly arising relating to the physiological and psychological aspects of man's life and activity, the dynamics of the social structure, technical requalification, free time, personal spiritual development and so on.

Ecological problems common to both the socialist and capitalist countries, and related questions of human life expectancy and the destiny of human civilisation, are becoming particularly urgent.

These and other questions are discussed in numerous works by Soviet philosophers, sociologists, economists, physiologists, ecologists, psychologists and other experts. Nevertheless, the philosophical and sociological aspects of the consequences of scientific and technological progress require far greater attention than they have hitherto received.

While it does not fall within the scope of this book to make a comprehensive analysis of the subject, we shall examine a few of these questions insofar as they concern humanism and socialist society.

The degree of humanity or inhumanity in human relations is determined ultimately by the *nature of labour in a society*.

The transformation of the social nature of labour that occurred with the transition from capitalism to socialism was expressed in several ways, the most important of which is the fact that labour ceased to be restrictive and was emancipated, becoming the universal duty of all citizens, acquiring a creative character, and the different attitude to labour that consequently emerged.

"Every factory from which the capitalist has been ejected, or in which he has been curbed by genuine workers' control," Lenin wrote, "every village from which the landowning exploiter has been smoked out and his land confiscated has only now become a field in which the working man can reveal his talents, unbend his back a little, rise to his full height, and *feel that he is a human being*"<sup>1</sup> (our italics—M.P.).

The fundamental change in the nature and purpose of labour, its *humanisation*, in socialist society predetermined the rapid rates of socialist construction in the USSR and other countries of the world socialist system.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 407.



The transformation of labour into a means of personal development, a means of developing people's energy and initiative, is one of the greatest achievements of socialism. The elimination of production anarchy and the crises and unemployment it engenders has greatly extended freedom as regards choice of a profession, the freedom to work in the field that best accords with the individual's abilities and inclinations.

It is common knowledge that scientific and technological progress makes necessary a considerably higher level of technical and production skills on the part of the workers. Freeing man from exhausting physical toil, it transforms work into the control and supervision of automated production processes. This presupposes a profound knowledge of the production process, and technology in general, and also a certain level of scientific knowledge. It is not simply a question of keeping an eye on the automatic plant and machinery but rather of controlling automated production processes, of transforming manual labour into a kind of engineering-technological work requiring a high level of technical and general education.

Many bourgeois ideologists attempt to identify the social consequences of automation under socialism with what happens under capitalism on the erroneous grounds that scientific and technological progress automatically means that the worker is pushed into the background and inevitably results in spiritual stultification. Indeed, under capitalism the majority of workers will be unable to adapt to the complicated machinery of the present and future, as bourgeois economists and sociologists are writing with alarm. In the capitalist countries, the ruling classes seek to use the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution to their advantage. At the same time this revolution, while exacerbating the social antagonisms of capitalism, increases the army of unemployed and thus runs counter to the interests of the working people.

Under socialism and communism, however, the scientific and technological revolution is given full scope and its results are accessible to *all working people*. No wonder that the Soviet state attaches paramount importance to the acceleration of scientific and technological progress and regards it as a major task of the present stage of communist construc-

tion. "Scientific and technical progress is the main lever for building the material and technical basis of communism," said Leonid Brezhnev at the 24th Party Congress, "the task we face... is one of historical importance: *organically to fuse the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution with the advantages of the socialist economic system*, to unfold more broadly our own, intrinsically socialist, forms of fusing science with production."<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, under socialism scientific and technological progress is not an end in itself, but is simply a means of raising labour productivity, creating an abundance of the material goods that are needed to move on to the stage of distributing them according to people's needs. At the same time it serves as a means of lightening labour, humanising it and making it more creative. That is why such attention is paid in the socialist countries to the modern physiology of labour, an important task of which is the elaboration of a criterion of technological progress based on social and hygienic factors.

*Comprehensive mechanisation and automation* must strictly correspond to the physiological rhythm of the human organism, which means that new machinery must be designed according to scientific principles of modern physiology.

In the USSR tremendous attention is currently being devoted to the problem of comprehensive mechanisation and automation. The CPSU and the Soviet government have devised and are applying special measures to introduce comprehensive *automation* on a mass scale, and transfer whole workshops and industrial establishments to full automation. The introduction of sophisticated automatic control systems is to be considerably accelerated in the near future, and cybernetics, computers and various electronic devices are to be extensively applied in industry, building construction and transport, scientific research, planning and design, accountancy and management. Such subsidiary processes as loading and unloading will also be thoroughly mechanised.

*Together with the nature of labour the professional qualifications of the workers will also change.*

The processes taking place at this stage of production

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Documents, Moscow, 1971, p. 69.

development indicate that narrow specialisation will gradually be eliminated altogether. New production technology and the high intellectual level of communist society will put an end to the practice whereby a person performs the same operations throughout his working life.

At the higher stage of communism the process of the transformation of labour will lead to a qualitative leap forward, and all work will be performed with the help of a system of sophisticated equipment, reducing the physical effort required of all workers to a minimum. Moral factors will replace personal material interests as the incentive to work. Every person will devote his efforts to social production not from economic need but because of an inner desire to be socially useful. Work will become a personal necessity, a source of personal satisfaction and fulfilment.

The attitude to work, and not only the nature of the work itself, will become creative. The division of people into manual and non-manual workers will disappear forever, for in the period of triumphant communism these two forms of work will merge and the narrow specialisation that so warps people's development will be replaced by a new kind of worker with a broad technical and cultural horizon. In these conditions the desire to work according to one's abilities will be fully satisfied.

As can be gauged from the above, the new man, the new type of worker, is already formed by society. This is natural, for a great project—the building of communism—cannot be advanced without the harmonious development of man himself. As Leonid Brezhnev said at the 24th CPSU Congress, “communism is inconceivable without a high level of culture, education, sense of civic duty and inner maturity of people just as it is inconceivable without the appropriate material and technical basis.”<sup>1</sup> At the present stage of social development in the USSR many workers and collective farmers have already attained a high cultural level, and their work does not differ essentially from that of the engineer or agronomist. Many have acquired a broad range of skills and have contributed various inventions and rational improvements in production.

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Documents, p. 100.

Scientific and technological progress under socialism has a tremendous influence on *the further development of the social structure* and is a means of perfecting socialist social relations. It leads to a considerable increase in the role of the scientists and technologists, and all groups of people engaged in non-manual work, and to a corresponding reduction in the number of people engaged in material production, to accelerated growth of the numbers of the intelligentsia, white-collar workers connected with science, technology, and so on.

While under capitalism scientific and technological progress leads to “redundancy” and intensification of labour, etc., under socialism it helps to eliminate distinctions between classes and social groups and bring them together. Socialism avoids “redundancy” thanks to planned training and retraining of the labour force, and the systematic growth of higher education and vocational training. Thus, the number of scientific workers in the USSR increased from 162,500 to 927,700 between 1950 and 1970, climbing to one quarter of the world total. In the same period the number of specialists with a higher education or vocational training employed in the national economy rose from 3,254,000 to 16,841,000.<sup>1</sup>

Study of the tendencies of scientific and technological progress, its unity with the nature and aims of socialist society, shows that it will provide the basis for the achievement of complete social equality under communism. In this connection the question of achieving *full material prosperity for all members of society, real economic equality*, and several other questions concerning the all-round development of one and all, assume a fundamental importance.

A number of bourgeois theoreticians, among them the venerable Jesuit fathers Bigo and Etcheverry, and several other anti-communists, try to deny or at least minimise the importance of material prosperity. Although in the interests of winning over the masses they are prepared to admit the importance of people's material circumstances and the need to improve them, the champions of capitalism basically reduce the question of humanism to various forms of religious or moral “perfection” of the individual.

<sup>1</sup> *The Soviet Economy in 1970*, pp. 656, 522. The latter figure excludes servicemen, pensioners and housewives.



The opponents of Marxism-Leninism are continually propagating the idealist notion that material prosperity is extraneous to the development of the individual and personal spiritual wealth. Sheltering behind a smoke-screen of fine words about moral spiritual values they accuse the Marxists-Leninists of "primitivism", or reducing the whole question of personal development to material prosperity.

Such fabrications and "theories" are criticised even by a number of bourgeois authors. Thus, Pierre Pathé writes that the Russian people, "an adept of historical materialism, has always been far removed from that sordid materialism which, although deplored in the rest of the world, has made such disastrous inroads there."<sup>1</sup>

This is perfectly true. The bourgeoisie and its ideologists indeed reduce everything to "sordid materialism", for all their false outcry against it.

Dewey's formula "I own, therefore I am" is the credo of contemporary bourgeois ideologists which underlies their approach to all matters. J. H. Tufts was writing in unison with this programmatic assertion: Freedom is the freedom of the buyer to buy whatever he likes, wherever he likes and at a price he can negotiate with the seller. The freedom of the seller is to sell wherever he likes and at a price which he can offer to the buyer, and the freedom of the employer is to hire the workers he likes for a wage agreed upon.<sup>2</sup> What is this if not an example of that very primitivism, that vulgar philistine "materialism" which the bourgeoisie and its ideologists ascribe to Marxism and socialism?

While they themselves reduce freedom to the freedom of the hired labourer, a form of bondage concealed by formal law agreements on labour relations, the representatives of the bourgeois world cry "primitivism" when the Marxists write of the need for real social and material conditions for personal freedom, freedom in the sense of real conditions for the all-round development of all members of society. But what is the price all these declarations about humanism and all the bourgeois-democratic freedoms put together for the

<sup>1</sup> P. C. Pathé, *Essai sur le phénomène soviétique. Le démiurge du XXe siècle*, Paris, 1959, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> See J. H. Tufts, *Ethics. Twentieth Century Philosophy*, New York, 1947, p. 23.

unemployed or the homeless, who tomorrow may pass from the proletariat to the *lumpenproletariat* and have to subsist on the pittance handed out by various mass organisations?

P. Lafargue wrote of the bourgeoisie: "The value of its civilisation and humanity can be measured by the number of men, women and children it deprives of any or all means of income and condemns to backbreaking labour day and night, to periodic unemployment, and makes the victims of alcoholism, tuberculosis and rickets. The value of its civilisation can also be measured by the growing number of misdemeanors and crimes, the growing number of mental homes, and the development and improvement of the penal system."<sup>1</sup>

Life fully confirms the idea that the demand for material prosperity for all members of society, although only a part of the Marxist-Leninist programme of humanism, is a major and decisive demand when it is a question of the flowering of personal freedom and all-round development.

In this connection it is necessary to mention the fundamentally erroneous, anti-Marxist arguments used by the "Left-wing" opportunists in the international communist movement and above all the Peking propagandists, who declare the struggle of the CPSU for high material living standards to be "back" sliding towards bourgeois dreams of welfare and see it as a symptom of going bourgeois, loss of revolutionary ardour, decadence and so on.

It is worth recalling that the "theories" of the Left-wing phrase-mongers about the social consequences of the fundamental improvements in the living standards of the peoples of the socialist countries bear a striking resemblance to the statements of various bourgeois ideologists. Thus, the West German journalist Klaus Mehnert writes in his slanderous book *Der Sowjetmensch*, that continued adherence to the principle of material incentives in the Soviet Union and improvements in the material living standards of the people lead to *embourgeoisement*, loss of collectivism and the growth of individualism.

In actual fact, the increase in the material prosperity of the Soviet people, and all the peoples of the world socialist

<sup>1</sup> Paul Lafargue, *Le déterminisme économique de Karl Marx*, Paris, 1928, p. 20.

system, engenders not individualism but communist collectivism.

Only serious misapprehension or deliberate misrepresentation can account for attempts to associate communism with poverty, suffering, disasters and unending extreme asceticism. Marx and Engels themselves wrote with profound conviction of the time when all the springs of social wealth will flow abundantly and linked this with the arrival of communism.

Lenin described the chief aim of communism as not only free all-round development but also *complete* prosperity for *all* members of society.

The CPSU and the Soviet government reject the absurd slanderous inventions of the Peking revisionists that a high standard of living leads to the "*embourgeoisement*" of Soviet people, and are doing everything in their power to ensure the introduction of superior technology in order to increase labour productivity and rapidly achieve a sufficiency and subsequently abundance of material values for every Soviet family, for all members of society.

Ignoring the objective historically-conditioned tendencies of the development of the communist system, anti-communists are doing their utmost to deny the notable achievements of socialism, in particular in the field of social equality and distribution of material goods. But nobody is capable of refuting the fact that socialism is the only system that eliminates the age-old antagonism between the development of the productive forces, the level of social wealth achieved, and people's demands (material and spiritual), between production and consumption, the fact that systematic consistent growth of the prosperity of the working masses is an historically-conditioned feature of the development of socialist society.

Under socialism, supplying the constantly growing material and cultural demands of all members of society has become the purpose of production for the first time in the history of class society. A convincing expression of this is the fact that three-quarters of the constantly growing national income of the USSR is assigned to satisfaction of the personal material and cultural demands of the working people. The growth of prosperity of Soviet people is directly dependent upon the growth of the national income.

Naturally the level of material prosperity achieved would have been incomparably higher were it not for the low economic level at which the building of socialism in the USSR started, were it not for the extremely costly and destructive wars forced on the Soviet state by the imperialist bourgeoisie, were it not for the complicated and protracted international tension, the threat of thermonuclear war, dictating the need to devote large sums to strengthening the country's defence capacity.

In speaking of the systematic increase of the material prosperity of Soviet people, it is essential to take into account the new form of distribution of the material and spiritual values produced by society that socialism has engendered—the growth in various payments and benefits received by the population of the USSR out of the state budget or at the expense of enterprises. This way of increasing the prosperity of the working people and creating better conditions of life for society as a whole and all its members, includes providing people with good housing, organising public catering, improving domestic services and amenities, extending the network of day nurseries and kindergartens, improving public education, organising rest and recreation facilities, improving the health service, building various cultural facilities and so on.

Thus, socialist social relations promote the unrestricted development of the productive forces and their use in the interests of the masses, in the interests of the all-round development of all members of society. This in turn is being more and more effectively promoted by the latest achievements of the country's science and technology, which are being applied on an ever increasing scale in production and life, and have a tremendous influence on man's intellectual world and all spheres of culture. Great discoveries in physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology and other sciences are being used more and more fully for the benefit of man.

The highest expression of the humanitarian nature of communist society will be the implementation of the principle of distribution "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs". "*Communism*," the CPSU Programme states, "*is a classless social system with one form of public ownership of the means of production and full social equality of all members of society; under it, the all-round*



*development of people will be accompanied by the growth of the productive forces through continuous progress in science and technology; all the springs of co-operative wealth will flow more abundantly, and the great principle 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs' will be implemented."*<sup>1</sup>

Communist distribution of the material and spiritual wealth produced by society will mark the triumph of full equality for all members of society. But this is dependent upon the elimination of the social distinctions between manual and non-manual workers that exist in socialist society, between town and countryside, between the working class and the working peasantry. It is dependent upon the achievement of a level of development of the productive forces creating an abundance of material wealth.

Setting forth the concrete paths for the implementation of the tasks of raising the people's material welfare, the CPSU and the Soviet government devote special attention to the distribution of the wealth of society through public funds, since this automatically leads to communist distribution. This is why the Party Programme provides for more rapid growth of public consumption funds than of wages. Furthermore, the main direction of the development of the public consumption funds is to be gradual transition to the maintenance of children and all who are unfit for work at the expense of society, free education and health service, free housing, free public amenities and services and free public transport.

Housing and domestic amenities are of tremendous importance in the creation of favourable conditions for all-round personal development, physical fitness and health. That is why so much attention is devoted to this matter in the USSR and other socialist countries. Suffice it to note that the volume of housing construction in the USSR is greater than in the USA, Britain, France, FRG, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland combined.

One of the major objective preconditions for all-round personal development is proper use of *free time*. The founders of Marxism-Leninism rightly stressed that *free time rather than working hours would be the yardstick of wealth*

*in communist society*. In the light of this, it would be hard to overestimate the importance of such measures introduced by the CPSU and the Soviet government as reduction of the working day, the transfer to a five-day week, and so on.

Quite frequently bourgeois ideologists arrogantly maintain that the workers only use their free time on base pursuits, pleasures and amusements and never use it for noble purposes. Experience wholly refutes such allegations. In the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, practice has shown that working people devote a considerable amount of their free time to studying, to self-improvement. Eloquent proof of this is the number of working people who take evening courses for young workers and various other courses, who study at technical colleges, or as external students at higher educational establishments, and enrol at various other institutions.

It goes without saying that there are still quite a number of people in the socialist countries who have not yet learned to make rational use of their free time, so that this has become a subject of widespread public debate. This is not "patronising" or "organising people's interests", as certain critics of socialism are wont to claim, but the solution of the vital question of making the most expedient use of free time.

The growth of people's material welfare and cultural level is one of the decisive factors *for improving health and physical fitness*. Bourgeois eugenicists tend to ascribe the high percentage of illness and mortality among the working masses in the capitalist world to biological inferiority or racial features, thereby trying to avoid the problem of socio-economic conditions for personal development and brazenly substitute for it the task of sterilisation, rules for preserving "racial purity" and so on.

In the socialist countries practice has shown that the physical fitness of all members of society depends on the solution of a whole complex of socio-economic, material, domestic and scientific problems. The population's health is ensured by observing the requirements of social hygiene, human physiology and psychology. That is why in the USSR and other socialist countries the people's health is a major concern of Party, state, trade union and other mass organisations. One of the most vivid expressions of the humanitarianism of socialist society is the great reduction achieved in

<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1961, p. 509.

the mortality rate and the increase of life expectancy. Thus, in the USSR the mortality rate in 1970 was about a quarter what it was in 1913, and amounted to only 8.2 per thousand. Infant mortality during the same period was reduced from 269 per thousand to 25.

No other country in the world has achieved such a rapid reduction in mortality rates. Whereas tsarist Russia had one of the highest rates in the world, the USSR has now one of the lowest. Life expectancy has increased from 32 in tsarist Russia to 44 in 1926-27 and to 70 in 1968-69. Various factors account for this, among them the achievements of Soviet medicine, the improvement of the health service, the development of prevention measures, higher living standards, with better working and housing conditions, etc. Suffice it to note that the USSR today has 668,400 of the total number of two and a half million doctors in the world, which is more than the USA, Britain and France have together.

Physical fitness and health is a major aspect of the all-round harmonious development of the individual. Hence the tremendous attention devoted to physical culture and sport in the USSR, especially since the war. An important factor here are the government decrees on obligatory PT lessons, with examinations and marks, in schools, technical colleges and higher educational establishments.

Thus, the increase in life expectancy is not a narrow biological matter, but a social matter. Clearly, with the further growth of material welfare, the improvement of housing and working conditions and the health service, with the development of medicine, longevity will become a quite common phenomenon and eventually the rule.

The question of life expectancy in modern conditions has become organically bound up with scientific and technological progress, and its influence on the aero-, geo- and biospheres.

Paradoxical though it may seem, scientific and technological progress does lead to some disruption of the harmonious ties between man and the natural environment, with results detrimental to man's health and fitness. This problem is so acute that it has become a subject of serious concern to scientists throughout the world, and has been examined at intergovernmental conferences and international scientific congresses.

"Man can move mountains and make rivers flow backwards," said Jean Dorst, the eminent French zoologist and ecologist when interviewed by a correspondent of the Italian newspaper *Espresso*. "Yet we cannot endlessly and radically interfere with nature."<sup>1</sup>

According to statistics, in the last hundred years or so man has destroyed 240,000 million tons of oxygen in furnaces replacing it with 360,000 million tons of carbon dioxide. According to J. Dorst, one Boeing burns 35 tons of oxygen on a single flight from Paris to New York. An increase in the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is observed everywhere, not only in large towns but even in the countryside. Dorst maintains that this leads to an increase in temperature, climatic changes, the melting of the ice caps, and inevitably produces a shortage of oxygen.

The well-known American ecologist, Paul Ehrlich, a UN expert, also writes about the threat to the biosphere. In his article "The Last Round" he quotes scientific data to show that the life expectancy of Americans born since 1946 (the beginning of the DDT era) does not exceed 49, and that by 1980 the average life expectancy in the United States will be down to 42 years.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Ehrlich describes the threat to human life that arises from the use of chemical substances and points to the reactionary role of the magnates of the chemical industry in their pursuit of superprofits. He concludes that for the sake of economic considerations Western society is condemning the whole planet to extinction.

Soviet scientists also express concern over the situation that has arisen as a result of scientific and technological progress. Thus, Professor Armand, who took part in an intergovernmental conference of experts, writes: "Mankind is growing at a startling pace, and technological civilisation is growing even faster: people are transforming, generally for the worse, the part of the planet that has been drawn into exploitation, the biosphere, and are squandering its resources and intensively making them into waste material. It is difficult to say what will happen first: whether the natural resources will be exhausted or we will be choked by the poisonous industrial waste. Both spell disaster."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, February 25, 1970.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Espresso colore*, No. 47, February 23, 1963, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, February 25, 1970.



Progressive scientists of the world express particular anxiety over the danger of thermonuclear war, which might well become a reality unless the peoples of the world and progressive forces everywhere are able to prevent a new imperialist world war.

We have cited statements by scientists from different countries in order to show the universal nature of the question under review, its importance for world civilisation as a whole, and the tremendous moral responsibility that all states and all men bear for this vital question of our time.

It is worth stressing once more the indisputable advantages of the socialist system over the capitalist in this respect. In the USSR, for example, the attention of the Soviet state and the whole Soviet public is focussed on the question of the correct use of the resources of the biosphere, the problem of nature conservation, and associated problems of redevelopment of production technology and many others.

The advantage of the socialist system in this particular matter is that it is able to avoid the inhuman social consequences of scientific and technological progress that are contrary to the interests of the masses, and to overcome the contradictions that arise in using the achievements of science and technology for the purpose of ensuring fuller satisfaction of man's growing demands, material and spiritual. This advantage of socialism is very largely determined by the absence of social antagonisms, and also, as we shall see further on, in the next section, by the planned activity of all social institutions.

From the analysis we have made in the foregoing sections of this chapter it can be seen that at all stages of its development the socialist state has focussed its attention on man. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the socialist state, rejecting the abstract approach to humanism, have always treated the practical solution of this problem as involving the implementation of fundamental socio-economic, political, cultural and other measures.

However, as already noted, the real possibilities of actually achieving the aims set depended on the development of socialist society, its economic potential and in certain circumstances were somewhat restricted by various factors.

The present level of economic and social development of socialism provides more favourable conditions for the solu-

tion of this task. The programme of socio-economic and cultural measures passed by the 24th Congress of the CPSU aimed at a fuller satisfaction of the Soviet people's growing material and cultural demands and interests is a practical expression of this. These measures include increasing the working people's incomes, growth of the public consumption funds (to 90,000 million by 1975), further improvement of the health service, the development of public education, culture and housing construction (565-575 million sq. m. of housing to be built during the current five-year plan). Describing the nature of socialism and its goals, L. I. Brezhnev emphasised in the Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 24th Congress that "under socialism the fullest possible satisfaction of the people's material and cultural requirements is the supreme aim of social production,"<sup>1</sup>—the main meaning of our Party's activity.

The "theoreticians" of anti-communism try to present these scientifically-based theses as a "humanist propaganda manoeuvre". They refuse to understand, indeed, are apparently incapable of understanding, that the creation of material and cultural conditions conducive to the all-round development of the abilities of Soviet people, of all working people, derives from the very nature of socialism. It is conditioned by the unity of such basic factors as the aim of socialism, the increased economic potential of society, and also the requirements of national-economic development under present-day conditions of scientific and technological progress. The influence of these factors is rooted, ultimately, in the absence of social antagonisms, and the fact that the historically-conditioned tendencies of the development of socialism are in harmony with the demands and interests of Soviet people.

The humanitarian essence of socialism and socialist ideology is also clearly expressed in the foreign policy of the socialist countries, in the consistent struggle of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries for world peace. In full accordance with the nature and essence of socialism and its humanist ideology, the 24th Congress of the CPSU devoted great attention to matters concerning the peace movement

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, pp. 50-51.

and international security. This profoundly humane, internationalist policy, was expressed in the demands put forward at the Congress for the elimination of hotbeds of war in South-East Asia and the Middle East, for an immediate, firm rebuff to all acts of aggression, for proclaiming renunciation of the threat or use of force in the solution of disputes to be a law of international life, for final recognition of the territorial changes that occurred in Europe as a result of the Second World War, and a basic switch to détente and peace on that continent, for European collective security, for treaties outlawing nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons, for an end to all nuclear tests, including underground tests, and the setting up of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world, and for nuclear disarmament by all states in possession of nuclear weapons. The Congress emphasised the need to step up the struggle to end the arms race of all kinds, the liquidation of foreign military bases, the reduction of military expenditure, first and foremost, by the big powers, and full implementation of the UN declarations on the granting of independence to colonies, the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, etc.<sup>1</sup>

To the supporter of abstract humanism, the above and similar questions may seem excessively pragmatic and empirical. He prefers to remain in the rarified atmosphere of abstractions, and penetrate the "mysterious" secrets of the human soul, to seek in the realm of the individual mind, the isolated psychological world or biological features of the individual, the "fundamental" solution to the problem of man.

It is this departure from analysis of concrete social matters, of the nature and dynamics of socialist society, the content and structure of people's demands and interests, and many other questions, that leads certain Western theorists of humanism to proceed to unscientific abstract theses on the nature of socialism and socialist humanism, and to identify the problem of man in socialist and capitalist society. But this approach has nothing in common with science, in particular with psychology, or indeed with Marxism for which they often claim to speak.

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, pp. 37-38.

### 3. Development of Socialist Democracy and the Problem of Personal Freedom

Personal freedom has always been and remains a vital question of humanism. It is central to the ideological struggle between the two world systems, into which various reactionary and progressive forces are drawn.

The struggle reached its most recent climax at the time of the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Imperialist reaction used the complicated, serious situation that had developed there—the struggle against counter-revolutionary forces endeavouring to abolish the socialist order in Czechoslovakia—for an inflated propaganda myth about the suppression of personal freedom by socialism, and to set up what they called "socialism with a human face" against "totalitarian" or "institutional" socialism, launching fierce attacks on the USSR. Under the banner of defence of "democratic socialism" and "humanising" socialism, reactionary forces carried out subversive activities against all the socialist countries. The imperialist reactionaries found allies among the revisionists and certain ideologically disorientated intellectuals.

Great credit is due to those foreign intellectuals who in the extremely complicated situation that obtained realised the class nature of the struggle and spoke out against the pseudo-humanitarian bourgeois propaganda. One of them was the British writer James Aldridge, who wrote: "Reaction now employs different methods. It has learned to use the toga of democracy and the language of freedom for its own purposes. It has mastered the art of saying one thing and doing the opposite. It has learned how to deceive the intellectuals, to mislead writers and artists, to entice into its nets the disillusioned young people. It does all this so skilfully that people confused by words (into which the enemies of the people put a meaning quite different from their true meaning) quite often begin to act against their own interests."<sup>1</sup>

There is nothing new in the practice of contrasting personal freedom and humanism on the one hand with "institutions" on the other. It is common knowledge that bourgeois and petty-bourgeois socialists have always opposed the polit-

<sup>1</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, September 25, 1968 (translated from the Russian).



ical struggle of the proletariat from the standpoint of Proudhonism, anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism and so on, denying the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat and a socialist state, and the guiding role of the Party. They have always associated personal freedom with "absolute freedom".

The contemporary champions of "absolute personal freedom" also subscribe to this unscientific idea, based on anthropologism and individualism. This view of freedom derives logically from various abstract-ethical, psychological and other conceptions of humanism, notably, the existentialist idea of man as an "asocial", "solitary", "abandoned" and "lost" creature. H. J. Blackham, for instance, Director of the British Humanist Association, defends this idea. He writes in unequivocal terms that humanism "proceeds from the assumption that man is on his own and . . . from the assumption of responsibility for one's own life and for the life of mankind. . . ."<sup>1</sup> On this "basis", he criticises communist society, which he refers to as "the closed society" and goes on to make the astonishing statement that: "In such a society there are no politics, that is, . . . no independence of persons or groups."<sup>2</sup>

In reality, as we have already stated, personal freedom in the broad positive sense is intimately related to and coincides with the aim of communist society. Its full significance is the *free all-round* development of *all* members of society, of *each* individual. This means that the problem of freedom of the individual in socialist society is complex and many-sided, involving the solution of a whole complex of economic, socio-political and spiritual tasks. Naturally, it is a product of the historical development of society, and its various facets are fluid and mobile, being determined by the level of social development that has been reached. Its achievement is an historically-conditioned process, dependent on the level of development of socialism.

Social practice has decisively confirmed the profoundly scientific nature of the Marxist-Leninist criticism of idealist, including abstract-ethical conceptions, and of various bourgeois apologia reducing the whole complex question to formal-law freedom within the framework of private ownership society and its institutions.

<sup>1</sup> H. J. Blackham, *Humanism*, Penguin Books, 1968, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

Inquiry reveals that the decisive social condition of personal freedom in socialist society is the abolition of exploiter classes and exploitation of man by man, and the achievement of social equality, the improvement of socialist production relations and their gradual transition into communist production relations. The consistent development of socialist democracy is one of the major factors here.

Marxists-Leninists have never made a secret of the fact that socialist democracy, as distinct from bourgeois democracy, is proletarian in its class nature and aims. They have always been perfectly explicit in admitting that the people's freedom is incompatible with the freedom of the people's enemies. Social democracy has been a form of social emancipation of the working people. As Lenin wrote of the Soviet socialist state: "A state more democratic, in the true sense of the word, one more closely connected with the working and exploited people, has *never yet existed*."<sup>1</sup>

The democracy of the Soviet Union and other socialist states is expressed in their genuinely humanitarian policy, which involves giving the workers the broadest guarantees of work and leisure, education and medical treatment, material security in old-age and in the case of illness or disablement, according equality to all citizens, irrespective of sex, nation, race, or material position, ensuring freedom of conscience, etc.

The change in the class structure of Soviet society as a result of the abolition of exploiter classes became the basis for the development of socialist democracy, and its transformation into democracy for the whole people. But this objective trend was far from smooth. Historically it came about that the general advance towards democratisation of Soviet socialist society was accompanied by certain restrictions of socialist democracy and by some breaches of socialist legality. These phenomena, which occurred in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, were in blatant contradiction to the essence of socialist democracy and socialist humanism. They were honestly revealed and strongly condemned by the ruling communist parties themselves. Steps were taken to prevent deviations from the profoundly democratic and humanitarian Leninist

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 433.

principles of Party and state life. Yet the ideologists of present-day anti-communism and their revisionist fellow-travellers continue to speculate on certain negative phenomena of the past. At the same time they are quite content to draw a veil of silence over mass repression in the capitalist world against progressive democratic organisations, intellectuals and students, courageously expressing their protest against the outrageous crimes of the American military, against the genocide being perpetrated by imperialist reaction against the Vietnamese and other peoples, against racism and other inhumane actions of so-called American democracy.

The decisive criterion of true democracy is the degree of actual participation of the broad working masses in the affairs of state. Lenin regarded this as the hallmark of socialist democracy. In the first years of the revolution he wrote: "proletarian dictatorship must inevitably entail not only a change in democratic forms and institutions, generally speaking, but precisely such a change as provides an unparalleled extension of the actual enjoyment of democracy by those oppressed by capitalism—the toiling classes."<sup>1</sup>

This fundamentally new essence of democracy is particularly apparent in the Soviet Union at the present stage of communist construction. Suffice it to note that 50.3 per cent of the deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are workers and collective farmers, and that over two million people take an active part in governing the country as working people's deputies in government bodies at all levels (the Supreme Soviets of the Union republics and Autonomous republics, and local Soviets), that there are no less than 25 million people engaged in active voluntary work on various Soviet committees.

As L. I. Brezhnev said in the Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 24th Congress, "...An important feature of the socialist system is that in our country the working people participate in the administration of society not only through state organs but also through a ramified network of mass organisations, above all, such as the trade unions and the Komsomol."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 95.

Today our trade unions have more than 98 million members. This is practically the entire working class, the whole of the working intelligentsia and numerous sections of rural workers.

The trade unions play a most important role in the development of socialist democracy. Forming the biggest mass organisation in the country, they have the task of encouraging more active worker participation in the management of production and public affairs, and of educating people in a spirit of constructive activity and initiative.

The democratic nature of the Soviet socialist state is expressed in the right of each citizen, each collective body, each republic, to play a part in solving questions of importance to society, to struggle against deviations from the norms and principles of socialist society, to criticise them and take action to ensure their removal.

Ignoring actual social relations and ties, the opponents of socialism mechanically transfer the category of alienation from capitalist to socialist society, and suggest that the very fact that the state exists indicates human alienation in socialist society. I. Fetscher goes so far as to assert: "As long as a state exists there can be no concrete freedom."<sup>1</sup>

Everything is perfectly obvious in the case of such virulent critics of communism as K. Mehnert, who during the counter-revolutionary demonstrations in Czechoslovakia in 1968 gleefully wrote how delightful it was to see how alienation, that "brainchild of Marx", was turning against his own cause and was now the sad fate of citizens of the socialist countries. There is of course nothing at all surprising in the standpoint of various Marxologists, Sovietologists and so on, who in their efforts to discredit socialism and socialist democracy are moved at best by a desire to identify socialism and capitalism, denying that there are any basic differences between them, and advance the theory of a single "industrial society" with supposedly common problems and tasks. However, when the concept of alienation is mechanically extended to socialism, and its elimination is pronounced the "cardinal problem" of socialism by various authors of philosophical

<sup>1</sup> I. Fetscher, *Von Marx zur Sowjetideologie*, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1959, S. 18.



and sociological works that claim to be Marxist, then we have a right to expect from them a serious analysis taking into account the dialectic of development of socialist society and all the questions relating to the question of man, notably, personal freedom.

We do not agree with the idea that alienation and all that this problem involves in bourgeois society is automatically eliminated as soon as public ownership of the means of production is introduced. Such a view represents a departure from the fundamental principles of the dialectic, from the historical approach to analysis of complex social processes. The baneful practice of "barracks socialism" in China today makes this abundantly clear.

If in its philosophico-sociological aspect the problem of alienation applied to socialism must express the dialectic of essence and existence, man's activities as an individual and a person, the real opportunities for a man to reveal his inherent powers, his talent and abilities, then in its spiritual, and notably, ethical aspect it is related to the dialectic of personal and social interests, with overcoming individualist and also religious alienation. The triumph of public ownership of the means of production, the abolition of exploiter classes and the exploitation of man by man, are simply the socio-economic basis for the elimination of alienation. They do not constitute the complete solution of the problem.

We endorse the opinion of M. Iovchuk, a prominent Soviet researcher into problems of humanism, who writes: "The process of overcoming the vestiges of alienation in the era of socialist construction is a protracted one involving sharp conflict with the forces and traditions of the old order, with bureaucratic distortions and petty-bourgeois/anarchist individualism. . . . The vestiges of 'alienation' in the transition period from capitalism to socialism and, to a certain extent, at the lower stage of communism, are manifested in the economic, political and spiritual spheres of the life of society and man. But this is no ground for asserting that socialism represents a new form of 'alienation of the human essence', that the socialisation of production, the abolition of exploitation, and the gradual transformation of the nature of labour and the old system of division of labour, which made

man an 'organ' with a particular function, do not remove the basis of this alienation."<sup>1</sup>

The vestiges of alienation" at the socialist stage of social development are connected with the level of socialist division of labour, the persistence of certain bureaucratic features, and of commodity and monetary relations, the low level of spiritual development that some members of socialist society have not yet progressed beyond, the continuing development of the individualist and religious outlook of some people. This being so, all the vestiges of "alienation" can only be removed at a higher stage of development of socialism, in the process of communist construction.

The problem of man is not an abstract-scholastic problem. As we have already seen, it involves a whole complex of socio-economic, political, legal, spiritual and many other questions. This means that a concrete historical approach is an essential condition for scientific analysis of the problem of man in socialist society, as well as in modern capitalist society. Although socialism is essentially one and has general features, the concrete historical conditions in which it develops vary from country to country, and from one time to another within the same country, depending upon what level of socialist society we are referring to. All this means that a dialectical, comprehensive and profound approach to the questions being analysed is required.

To mechanically transfer the concept of "alienation" from capitalist to socialist society is of no help at all in making a concrete analysis of the negative features that persist as an alien presence in socialist society. Historical analogies are always relative and judgments based purely upon analogies tend to be grossly inaccurate.

Viewing the concept of alienation as a major category of historical materialism, the author regards as mistaken any attempts whatsoever to narrow down this extensive concept and squeeze into it the whole complex, many-sided subject of man and personal freedom without taking into account the qualitatively new, developing social and spiritual processes and relationships.

<sup>1</sup> M. Iovchuk, "Problems of the Spiritual Freedom of the Individual", *The Individual under Socialism*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1968, p. 164 (in Russian).

The theoreticians of anti-communism and revisionist authors who contrast "institutional socialism" with humanism and without undertaking any serious analysis of the real state of affairs declare alienation to be a "central problem" of socialism, ignore the real aims and activities of socialist social institutions—the State, the Party, the trade unions and other public organisations—and attribute to them the sole function of restricting personal freedom.

In fact, the concept "central problem", applied to socialism and socialist institutions, cannot be limited to purely negative aims presented in a distorted manner, but comprises positive, constructive tasks, which even the most advanced bourgeois democracy is incapable of fulfilling. These tasks relate to the real achievement of personal freedom, as the expression and development of the abilities and qualities of one and all, or, as Marx wrote in *Capital*, the all-round development of human powers as the inherent aim of society.

It is surely superfluous to demonstrate that these constructive tasks do not fit into the concept of "abolishing alienation", although connected with it. They are expressed in the category of integrate man, the achievement of which is the aim of socialist society as a whole, and of its institutions which are working to create the necessary conditions for the purposeful transforming activity of the working people in all spheres of material and social life, the conditions providing man with the fullest opportunities for self-expression in the role of active transformation. It must be borne in mind here that despite all its positive qualities and achievements, socialist democracy has nevertheless its historical limitations, determined by the level of development of socialist society, the international situation and the principal contradiction of the age—the contradiction between socialism and capitalism.

These conditions have a bearing on the problem of freedom too, in particular, the spiritual freedom of Soviet people. The process of development of man's spiritual freedom under socialism, in the sphere of social thought included, does not take place in isolation from the capitalist world. As long as imperialism and reactionary bourgeois ideology exist, pending the building of communist society, removing all social contradictions, personal spiritual freedom in socialist

society, while developing and becoming ever more wide and varied, cannot be complete.<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, in analysing the problem of freedom in socialist society as well as questions of socialist democracy, it is essential to take into account the historically-conditioned tendencies of its progress, its prospects, its present and future.

"...There can be no victorious socialism that does not practice full democracy..."<sup>2</sup> Lenin wrote. Putting this idea into practice, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union works consistently and purposefully to ensure the development of socialist democracy, as a means of involving millions of working people in the process of consciously shaping history and in running society.

In the course of development of socialist society, socialist relations will gradually grow into communist relations. On this basis democracy will gradually lose its political character. This will have an impact on the activity of the individual we call political freedom, and will thus entail an extension of spiritual freedom.

#### 4. Personal Spiritual Development

*Spiritual wealth* is a major and essential component of all-round personal development. This concept comprises the variety and depth of a man's inner world, achieved through the sum total of his knowledge in various fields of theory, material and spiritual culture, knowledge conducive to the transformation of life according to fine, noble ethical and aesthetic principles.

Personal spiritual wealth has nothing in common with passive accumulation of knowledge. The concept "spiritually rich individual" is not synonymous with that of "well-educated person", although education is an essential condition for spiritual wealth. The well-educated person becomes a spiritually rich individual only when he takes an active

<sup>1</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of this question the reader is referred, in particular, to *Leninism and Philosophical Problems of Our Time*, Mysl Publishers, 1970, and V. Davidovich, *Facets of Freedom*. Moscow, 1969 (both in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 144.



approach to his knowledge, when his knowledge enables him to develop convictions and principles of behaviour and becomes a means of understanding and transforming reality. It must be added that not all systems of knowledge or all views and actions that proceed from them can be equated with the concept of "spiritual wealth". The concept does not extend to knowledge, views and actions that run counter to the truth and social development. It has a special moral-ethical colouring and it would thus never occur to anyone to refer to even the most educated racist as "a spiritually rich individual".

In the conditions of socialist society a polytechnical education, a scientific, dialectical-materialist world view, profound ideological conviction, a high communist code of ethics and developed aesthetic taste together comprise the essence of spiritual wealth.

A person's spiritual wealth is to be gauged by the content, many-sidedness and development of his spiritual demands, as well as his psychological make-up, since the latter acts as the organising form of a person's spiritual wealth.

In socialist society the nature and content of the activity of the working masses undergo a qualitative change, producing a corresponding change in the structure of their spiritual life, and also individual psychology.

Here we must pause to examine the conclusions Erich Fromm reaches about the individual in the socialist countries proceeding from his idea that the abstract *homo consumens* is characteristic of the twentieth century as a whole, of capitalism and socialism alike. "This process has its own logic," Fromm writes. "The material success of capitalism was immensely impressive to those poorer countries in Europe in which communism had been victorious, and the victory of socialism became identified with successful competition with capitalism, *within* the spirit of capitalism. . . . This development has been furthered by the fact that Soviet communism, in accepting a crude version of Marx's 'materialism', lost contact, as did the capitalist countries, with the humanist spiritual tradition of which Marx was one of the greatest representatives."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Erich Fromm, "The Application of Humanist Psychoanalysis to Marx's Theory", in *Socialist Humanism*, edited by Erich Fromm, New York, 1966, p. 237.

This conclusion is completely unfounded. It is formulated without analysis of the facts, without reference to the actual processes of social and spiritual development of Soviet society, and simply results from dogmatic absolutisation of the factor of consumption, of material demand, as the main basis of personal interests. Otherwise it is difficult to see how one can so lightly deny what a people numbering over 240 million have achieved by their efforts in the course of over half a century.

When referring to the attitude of Soviet society to the "humanist spiritual tradition" of Marx, one can hardly fail to take into account the real spiritual processes in the development of the people, ignore the stages of their development, and write of "Soviet communism" without distinguishing between socialism and communism, between what has been accomplished and the aim, the ideal.

Fromm writes: "The task for the socialist theoreticians is to study the nature of human needs; to find criteria for the distinction between *genuine* human needs, the satisfaction of which makes man more alive and sensitive, and *synthetic* needs created by capitalism, which tend to weaken man, to make him more passive and bored, a slave to his greed for things."<sup>1</sup>

This advice is perhaps reasonable in itself. But theoretical generalisations on the character of people of our century, their spiritual world, ought surely to be based on investigation of their demands, on inquiry into the structure of the real interests of the individual in socialist society. Although special study of this problem in the USSR only began recently, the last ten to fifteen years have seen the publication of many books and articles that permit a more objective and complete definition of the demands and interests of Soviet people.<sup>2</sup>

Thus numerous surveys carried out in many republics and regions, in industrial centres and country areas, show the

<sup>1</sup> Erich Fromm, *Socialist Humanism*, op. cit., p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> A number of symposia have been held for theoretical analysis of the spiritual life of the working class, notably the all-union symposium in Sverdlovsk in 1968, records of which were published in *Leninism and Questions of the Spiritual Life of the Working Class*, Sverdlovsk, 1968 (in Russian).

fundamental changes that have occurred in the interests of the worker, collective farmer and intellectual, in the correlation of people's material and spiritual interests, in attitudes to the common interests of society, the nature of spiritual interests, and so on.

Practical research into the interests of young people that has been carried out systematically by sociologists in Leningrad, Moscow, Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk and many other places reveals that material interests are simultaneously constant and variable, that the more advanced personal spiritual development is the more they become subordinate to spiritual demands and interests. This is revealed in the young people's choice of job, their attitude to work, the way they make use of their free time and various other indicators.<sup>1</sup>

Spiritual demands would seem to include various aspirations and demands—ideological, political, scientific, technological, aesthetic, ethical and so on—connected with the functioning and development of personal or social awareness, the transforming activity of the individual and society and the development of civilisation.

Each of these components is a subject for special analysis. We therefore propose to examine only a few general questions relating to spiritual and, in particular, ethical development of the individual in Soviet socialist society.

Personal spiritual development in the USSR at the present stage of building communism is the result of the social achievements of socialism, of the cultural revolution that has been carried out there. As Lenin wrote, only under socialism can the working people "display their abilities, develop their capacities, and reveal those talents, so abundant among the people whom capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands of millions".<sup>2</sup>

The broad rights and freedoms the Soviet socialist state has accorded its citizens provided the concrete conditions for the rapid growth of the educational, cultural and intellectual level of the masses, making the masses the carriers and creators of the finest spiritual values.

In order to gain at least a general idea of the gigantic

scale of what has been accomplished in the cultural development of Soviet people, it is sufficient to bear in mind that according to the census of 1897 the illiteracy rate in tsarist Russia was as much as 72 per cent of the urban and rural population aged between 9 and 49. This onerous inheritance was still making itself felt in the USSR well into the thirties. However, by 1939, the general literacy rate was 87.4 per cent, in 1959—98.5 per cent, and in 1970—99.7 per cent. Thus, within forty years of Soviet power, all the peoples of the USSR had achieved universal literacy. In 1959, the number of people with a higher or secondary education reached 58.7 million, or 361 per thousand inhabitants and in 1971—99.2 million, or 496 per thousand inhabitants. Today, more students are enrolled at higher educational institutions in the USSR than in all the capitalist countries of Western Europe put together, and the country is turning out over four times as many engineers annually as the USA. Moreover, the number of graduates is growing considerably faster than in the USA.

The Soviet Union has also made stupendous advances in training scientific workers, in expanding the network of libraries and the number of books they contain, in building clubs and arts and culture centres, in theatre, cinema and museum attendances, in printing and publishing, especially of fiction, newspapers and magazines. In many of these fields, the USSR leads the world, often with figures several times larger than those of the advanced capitalist countries.

The achievements of the USSR and other socialist countries in the development of culture for the masses clearly demonstrate the absurdity of the "theories" of a number of bourgeois philosophers about the masses being a "lower state of humanity" and something "anonymous, amorphous and dense", the impossibility of educating the masses, and other such views as were expressed by several of those who attended the International Philosophical Congress in Mexico City, among them H. Marcuse and F. Larroyo.

It is common knowledge that capitalism has artificially hampered the spiritual development of the masses for centuries. According to UNESCO statistics, today the illiteracy rate for the population is 46.8 per cent in Asia and 73.7 per cent in Africa and Arab countries. The spiritual development

<sup>1</sup> See Bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 404.



of the working people is also artificially impeded in the advanced capitalist countries, where it is practically impossible for workers to acquire a higher education. But even these circumstances do not entitle representatives of the bourgeois cultural élite to make the generalisations and draw the conclusions they do.

It is perfectly clear in the light of the processes taking place in the socialist countries how untenable and reactionary are the theories of contemporary bourgeois ideologists about the limited possibilities of spiritual development of the masses.

At the dawn of Soviet power, Lenin wrote: "... We cannot at present even imagine at all accurately what rich forces lie hidden in the masses of the working people, in the diversity of labour communes of a large state, in the forces of the intelligentsia, who have hitherto worked as lifeless, dumb executors of the capitalists' predetermined plans, what forces are lying hidden and can reveal themselves given a socialist structure of society."<sup>1</sup> These ideas of Lenin's are organically embodied in the content and direction of the general cultural and spiritual development of all the working people and each individual in socialist society. Moreover, this development has never consisted, and still less does so today, solely in the passive accumulation of scientific, technological, aesthetic and other knowledge, merely in assimilation of the flow of contemporary scientific information.

The training of specialists in various fields, the development of culture and education among the people, represent a major factor of their critical-constructive, practical-revolutionary activity in creating new communist forms of social relations, the historically most progressive, and are the condition for the practical fulfilment of ethical ideals and principles and moral norms. This means that the parameters of people's spiritual development and the range of their outlook are organically united with their personal social activity, with the development of the creative principle in man.

The ever increasing participation of the masses in state and public affairs is one of the major factors of personal spiritual development in contemporary conditions. It pro-

motes the widening of people's outlook and raises their awareness to the level of that of statesmen.

*High aesthetic demands and personal aesthetic culture*—feelings, tastes, concepts and ideals—are an important indicator of the spiritual development of man in socialist society.<sup>1</sup> Never before in history has a society devoted so much attention to the question of personal spiritual development, or created such broad opportunities for the working people to improve their aesthetic culture, as socialist society. Under socialism the question of the content, principles, forms and means of aesthetic education and development have acquired a state and nationwide importance for the first time in history.

It goes without saying that *moral development* is of special importance in the spiritual world of the individual. The direction of this development is a major indicator of relationship to the humanitarian tradition of Marx, with which it appears to Erich Fromm "Soviet communism" has lost touch.

The problem of moral progress is, of course, at the heart of the present-day ideological struggle. Many bourgeois theoreticians maintain that in the age of "industrial society" man inevitably loses all his true humanity and finds himself standing beyond "good" and "evil", and that all fine moral ideals and aims go down before his "fiercest, individualistic passions".

There is no doubt that the monstrous violence committed against tens and millions of people by imperialist reaction, the horrors of imperialist wars embarked on in pursuit of profits, the use of scientific and technological discoveries for mass annihilation of people, are sufficient indication of "erosion of morals", regression and stagnation, and a contradiction between scientific and technological progress and human moral development in the capitalist world today. But attempts to extend this to "contemporary society" as a whole, to the whole of mankind, ignoring the class nature of morality, is quite unscientific and patently untenable.

Some bourgeois authors are making the most determined efforts to deny moral progress in the development of Soviet

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 209.

<sup>1</sup> This aspect of personal spiritual development is comprehensively analysed in a number of works included in the Bibliography.

people. Referring to old, worn-out concepts of the "immutability" and "sinfulness" of human nature, inherent "ego-centrism", they claim that the communist revolution stopped powerless before that impregnable moral bastion of the "human spirit".

One of the reasons for such assertions is the fear the great moral progress of socialist society inspires in the present-day bourgeoisie and its ideologists. The American Professor, C. Brinton, frankly admits this in his book *A History of Western Morals*. Condemning communist morals, he is nevertheless forced to admit: "The danger that Russia may yet prove to have a crusading zeal, a social and moral discipline that will defeat us, has worried many of our publicists, and not without reason."<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, at no other time in history has such profound, wide-scale progress in personal moral development been observed as in the USSR and other socialist countries. At the same time, never before in history has the moral improvement of the individual had such a direct and powerful impact on the development of society as under socialism. That is why bourgeois ideologists attempt to distort the question of the possibilities and directions of moral progress in socialist society.

Thus, H. Marcuse, in his attempt to refute personal moral progress under socialism, maintains that in communist ethical philosophy "it is difficult to find a single moral idea or syndrome of moral ideas that is not common to Western ethics. Care, responsibility, love, patriotism, diligence, honesty, industriousness, the injunctions against transgressing the happiness of one's fellow men, consideration for the common interest—there is nothing in this catalogue of values that could not be included in the ethics of the Western tradition."<sup>2</sup>

Marcuse then attempts to deny all that is positive in communist morals, to reduce everything to the question of the role of man in increasing labour productivity. Echoing the long-since obsolete ideas of Bigo, Martin d'Arcy, Etcheverry and other anti-communist "theoreticians", he writes:

<sup>1</sup> C. Brinton, *A History of Western Morals*, New York, 1959, p. 411.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism. A Critical Analysis*, New York, 1958, p. 232.

"Productivity, 'development of the productive forces', is then and now the ethical value which is to govern the personal as well as the societal relationships."<sup>1</sup>

It is true that in moral development there is a certain amount of continuity, that certain norms and principles as such coincide in different historical forms of ethics, that there exist norms developed over the centuries which have a certain universal content. However, the fact of continuity does not exclude the development of new features at every stage of historical progress, including the significance of the communist ethic as a higher form of moral progress than the one which preceded it.

Marcuse vainly tries to reduce communist ethics to the question of the role of man in the development of productivity. There is no denying that a conscientious attitude to work is an important principle of the communist ethic: this is one of its virtues, determined not only by the need to develop the productive forces of socialist society, but by understanding of the role of labour in man's spiritual, including moral development. But communist morality is a complex social phenomenon, a form of social awareness and social practice, comprising ethical ideals dictated by the needs of social progress, determining the direction of the personal spiritual progress in socialist society and the whole system of views, feelings and other personal human qualities.

A distinctive feature of the communist ethics is that it embraces and reflects not only the sum total of principles, rules and norms regulating people's relations with one another, with society, the state, their homeland, their family etc., but also moral feelings, concepts and aims, among them the understanding of man's purpose and the meaning of life; not only the social sphere, the relationship between social and personal interests, the most important problem of ethics, but also the sphere of the individual awareness, relating to the individual's relationship with himself, his moral self-awareness, his moral psychology—the sense of individuality, human dignity, conscience and moral responsibility. Therefore, in speaking of moral progress it is essential to take into account the sum of these factors, both the relationship between personal and social interests, and the level of personal moral self-awareness.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 249.



Naturally, here we can only discuss the tendencies of personal moral development, and in the aspect that concerns us, namely, the question of spiritual development as fundamental to humanism, since a more complete analysis is a subject for special works.<sup>1</sup>

*The criterion of moral progress* is concrete and historical in character, and this must be taken into account in defining it. Yet we cannot possibly overlook its most general expression—active revolutionary humanism. This concept, which most fully reveals the essence of communist ethics, is reflected both in the sphere of personal and social interests, that central problem of ethics, and in the attitude to man as the highest value in the world, in human relationships.

In Marxist-Leninist ethical literature, humanism is frequently treated as a moral principle and identified with the concept of *humanitarianism*. It is true that the historically-conditioned tendency of personal moral perfection in socialist society is development of a sense of humaneness, humanitarianism, based on the attitude to man as the highest value and profound respect for personal human dignity.

Love for one's fellow men and altruistic feelings, as Lenin wrote, are "the most rudimentary, the most elementary premises, convictions and principles of *the whole of democracy*."<sup>2</sup>

These principles have been defended throughout history, and are being defended today, by progressive thinkers and men of action, by the democratic layers of society. In them is revealed one of the forms of moral progress, continuity in the development of ethics as a form of social awareness.

A fundamental sense of humaneness is the moral basis of the struggle of the democratic forces in the capitalist countries, and of all progressive mankind, for peace, against the policy of war, against international tension.

Although humaneness and altruism are the elementary principles of any democracy, in capitalist society, especially today, they cannot become a universal moral norm in human relationships. Due to private ownership, bourgeois society is an inverse world in which natural human qualities are confused and replaced, so that there is no man as such, as Marx so aptly put it.

<sup>1</sup> See Bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 324.

With the triumph of socialism love of one's fellow men and other fine human feelings were liberated for the first time in history from the social and other fetters that hampered them under capitalism, and were imbued with a new content and appeared in a new form.

Based on a high type of social relations, *humanity and love for one's fellow men become a moral norm of human relationships in socialist society*, a feature of people's moral awareness and behaviour. As Marx put it, these feelings become human in both the objective and subjective sense. They are rooted not only in the sphere of production relations, but are inculcated in people from childhood, instilled in them through the whole system of social relations and various forms of social awareness.

A distinctive feature of communist ethics, a manifestation of its humanitarianism, is deep, boundless love for people, for man.

The humane nature of human relations in socialist society is expressed in the principle "Man is a friend, comrade and brother to man". The proclamation of this principle as a universal moral norm is an expression of a new stage in the moral development of Soviet society, the tendency towards further moral progress. The Maoists, ultra-revolutionaries in word and traitors to the working people's cause in practice, see this in quite another light. They regard the humaneness of communist ethics as a "betrayal" of proletarian ethics, as "assumption" of bourgeois liberalism, and substitution of bourgeois humanitarian theory for the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of class struggle and dictatorship of the proletariat.

But it is surely perfectly clear to anyone in his right mind that it is communist humanity and not bourgeois humanity that characterises the moral progress being achieved at the present stage of building communism. This new historically-conditioned tendency of human relations was given theoretical expression in *the moral code of the builder of communism*.

The attitude of public intolerance of various serious and still persisting defects that has been created in recent years is playing an outstanding role in the development of humane relations in the USSR. I have in mind the critical attitude to various forms of bureaucracy, to instances of neglect of

the interests of the individual and insults to human dignity, and other phenomena that go against traditions and essence of communist humanism.

However, in analysing the question of the humanitarian nature of the communist ethics we proceed from the view that *humanism is broader than humaneness* in content and scope, and that a humane attitude to people is only one form in which humanism is manifested.

Humanism pervades the *entire* spiritual world of Soviet man, is its *essence* and is expressed in morality, moral goals, devotion to communism, understanding of man's purpose, the meaning of life, happiness and duty, in the sense of moral responsibility towards the people and mankind, in comradely mutual assistance, internationalism, and implacable hostility towards the enemies of communism, peace and the freedom of the peoples. These and other principles and concepts, in various aspects, express the humanitarian essence of the communist ethics. They are all associated with the view that man is the highest value, and reflect this view in various forms. That is why the enemies of Marxism-Leninism try to substantiate their false dogmas about the "inhumanity" of Marxism-Leninism and the communist ethics not by criticising any particular principles but by distorting the aim of communist morality, by maintaining that it runs counter to the interests of the proletariat, and by distorting the Marxist interpretation of the relationship between personal and social interests, and the norms and principles of communist ethics, notably, the concepts of happiness, conscience, duty, etc.

The humanitarian nature of the communist ethics is most fully expressed in devotion to the cause of communism. Although this is expressed in the form of various standards, they all relate to the development of man's moral self-awareness. Unless this is understood, it is impossible to appreciate the everyday mass heroism that Soviet people have demonstrated in opening up virgin lands, working on the massive construction projects of communism, building gigantic new industrial installations, new towns, and so on.

The humanitarian essence of the communist ethics is based on *collectivism*. The removal of the vestiges of the bourgeois individualist outlook and the mass transition from individualism to collectivism, to comradely mutual assistance, rep-

resent a real revolution in the moral development of Soviet people, which bourgeois ethicists are to this day unable and unwilling to understand.

Failing to understand and ignoring the historically-conditioned tendencies of human moral progress under socialism, bourgeois ideologists variously distort the essence of the moral processes taking place. It is characteristic that a few years ago several Western sociologists and moralists expressed the opinion that according to Marxist principles, the Russian peasant, once he had learned to live like the American mechanic would be bound to begin to think like the American mechanic and have the same aspirations.

Such opinions reflect a failure to understand the role of social relations in human spiritual, including moral, development, the substitution of material position for social relations, and refusal to believe in moral progress based on collectivism. Yet collectivism is coming to have an ever greater influence on the hearts and minds of Soviet people, its development being ultimately conditioned by the course of social progress, by the amelioration of socialist social relations.

The collectivism of Soviet people is expressed in manifold practical forms. These include the free sharing of knowledge and experience, leaving a first-rate work team to join one that is lagging to help it catch up with the leaders, old-age pensioners continuing to attend their former place of work unpaid in an advisory capacity to give the younger employees the benefit of their experience, the activities of the innovators' councils in factories, people giving their time to voluntary work in design and technology offices, public offices and economic analysis groups, the activities of various special commissions set up by government bodies, local Soviets and housing management committees, laying out and tending gardens shared by the occupants of blocks of flats, and so on and so forth.

In examining the connection between collectivism and humanism, special emphasis should be laid on the *role of collectivism* in the development of the individual and his moral self-awareness.

Bourgeois ideologists are wont to treat collectivism as an expression of a primitive moral awareness, as something akin to the herd instinct associated with underdeveloped people who have not yet become aware of their individual



identity. They proceed to identify the collectivism of socialist society with that of primitive society, which, as Marx wrote, was based on "the immature development of man individually, who has not yet severed the umbilical cord that unites him with his fellow men in a primitive tribal community...."<sup>1</sup>

Champions of anti-communism today are fond of speculating on the factor of material interest, presenting collectivism as the suppression of individuality, as a kind of ascetic rejection of personal interest. They write that Soviet people "reject" collectivism and the idea of equality. On this fragile basis they hasten to announce the "triumph" of the age-old principles of human selfishness. Bourgeois ideologists are apparently incapable of conceiving a person without such "eternal", "immutable" qualities as egoism and individualism. This is understandable to some extent, since historically the development of the sense of personal identity at the time of the rise of capitalism strengthened awareness and sense of individualism and egoism, as it was bound to when it took place on the basis of private ownership relations. The wider the gap between the individual and the masses, between the individual and the community, the higher the individual stood above the masses, the greater his sense of individuality and "selfhood".

In socialist society the social foundations of moral personal development are quite different. Socialist and public relationships produce collectivism, and as they develop so collectivism comes to take an ever greater hold of people's minds and feelings. Such is the historically-conditioned tendency of the moral development of Soviet man, although, it goes without saying, one still meets with cases of egoism and individualism in socialist society.

A feature of collectivism at the present stage of communist construction is the fact that it is organically related to growing self-awareness and sense of human dignity, the growth of people's awareness of their social value.

The growth of individual self-awareness is not new in itself, for it has been developing throughout the Soviet period. But this awareness has certainly never been so strong and widespread as it is today. Socially this process would

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Capital*, Moscow, 1963, Vol. 1, p. 79.

seem to be rooted in the gradual growth of historical activity of the masses, and is undoubtedly to be associated with the development of socialist democracy.

Together with the growth of a sense of dignity and honesty there is a growth in the sense of duty, the sense of personal moral responsibility for the communist cause and the destiny of the people.

Thus, collectivism, far from suppressing individuality, is actually the only basis for the development of self-awareness in accordance with humanitarian principles.

In speaking of the connection between humanism and collectivism, it must be appreciated that collectivism inculcates such noble principles as comradely mutual assistance and friendship, and humanity towards one's fellow men.

Collectivism has provided the fine moral basis for the development of the unity of personal and social interests, the high ideal of the communist ethics. At the same time, collectivism, far from destroying the individual's moral Ego, has actually promoted its spiritual enrichment, imparting strength and confidence. A. Makarenko had good cause to write of the people born of the October Revolution and educated by it: "We have learned to be happy in the supreme sense that we can be proud of our happiness. We have learned to be happy in our work, in our creative endeavours, in victory and in struggle."<sup>1</sup>

Developing this idea, we can add that Soviet people have learned a new kind of happiness in their personal lives, by uniting the interests of their personal happiness with those of society.

The new moral character of Soviet people was plain for all to see in the grim years of the Great Patriotic War, when both the military strength of the socialist state and the moral fibre of Soviet people, their moral Self, their new moral principles, were put to the acid test.

Marx's view of socialist society, expressed in the statement "The development of the *social individual* (our italics—M.P.)—this is what becomes the main pillar of production and wealth" is being fulfilled.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. S. Makarenko, *Works*, Vol. 7, Moscow, 1962 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Rohentwurf) 1857-1858*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1953, S. 593.

The "social individual" developing in socialist society presents a remarkable fusion of noble moral self-awareness, human dignity and honour with adherence to communist ideas, noble ideals and Soviet patriotism, based on humanism and internationalism, and a sense of moral responsibility for their own people and all mankind. These noble moral principles are clearly revealed in their attitude to problems of war and peace, to the struggle of the peoples for freedom and independence, in their deep concern for the destiny of the peoples and all mankind, in their hatred for all forms of bondage and oppression, and their readiness to fulfil their internationalist obligations towards all victims of imperialism.

Summing up what had been achieved in fifty years of Soviet power, the CPSU Central Committee noted: "New generations have been brought up in a spirit of whole-hearted loyalty to communist ideals, convinced of the justice of our great cause. The character of Soviet man has been forged, the character of fighter, revolutionary and conscious working man."<sup>1</sup>

This progress was not, could not have been, the automatic consequence of the triumph of socialist social relations. It was influenced by subjective as well as objective factors. It is a distinctive feature of the moral progress achieved under socialism that for the first time in history it developed and continues to develop, as part of the process of transformation of the social and individual moral awareness of millions of people. This experiment without parallel in the development of social, and especially, individual awareness, carried out under the guidance of the Communist Party, is many times more complicated than any scientific experiment. It has been based, and still is, on practical development of the revolutionary ideology and ethics of the proletariat, but it at the same time involves "human material" which had for centuries been weaned on individualist norms and connected by countless threads with the habits and traditions of millions of people, the stagnation and routine of their age-old way of life.

Personal spiritual development is conditioned by the mul-

tiplicity and variety of human relations. The individual, who enters into these relations as active subject of the historical process, of the social and spiritual life of society, reveals his creative abilities, inclinations and interests. The opportunities for people to develop their abilities and talents is directly dependent upon the wealth of the human relationships within which the individual acts. This means that with the subsequent development of socialist society and socialist democracy ever more favourable conditions will be created for the spiritual development of society as a whole and all its members.

Life clearly demonstrates that communist humanism, like communism as a whole, is not the fruit of fancy but an expression and imperative of objective reality, of the laws of historical development.

The unity of the essence and life-activity of man, his highest flowering and transformation into an absolute value, a new kind of relationship between the individual and society and between peoples, the domination of genuinely humane principles in people's thoughts and deeds—all this is not simply a beautiful dream but is an imperative of history. The transition to the communist stage of humanism is an inevitable process, determined by the historically-conditioned tendency of the transition from socialism to communism.

In vain do the ideologists of imperialism attempt to frighten man and mankind with their gloomy apocalyptic visions, predicting the inevitability of imminent decline and fall. Man is only at the beginning of his real history, at the beginning of his road to the world of genuinely human relations.

<sup>1</sup> 50th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, 1967, Moscow, p. 46.



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